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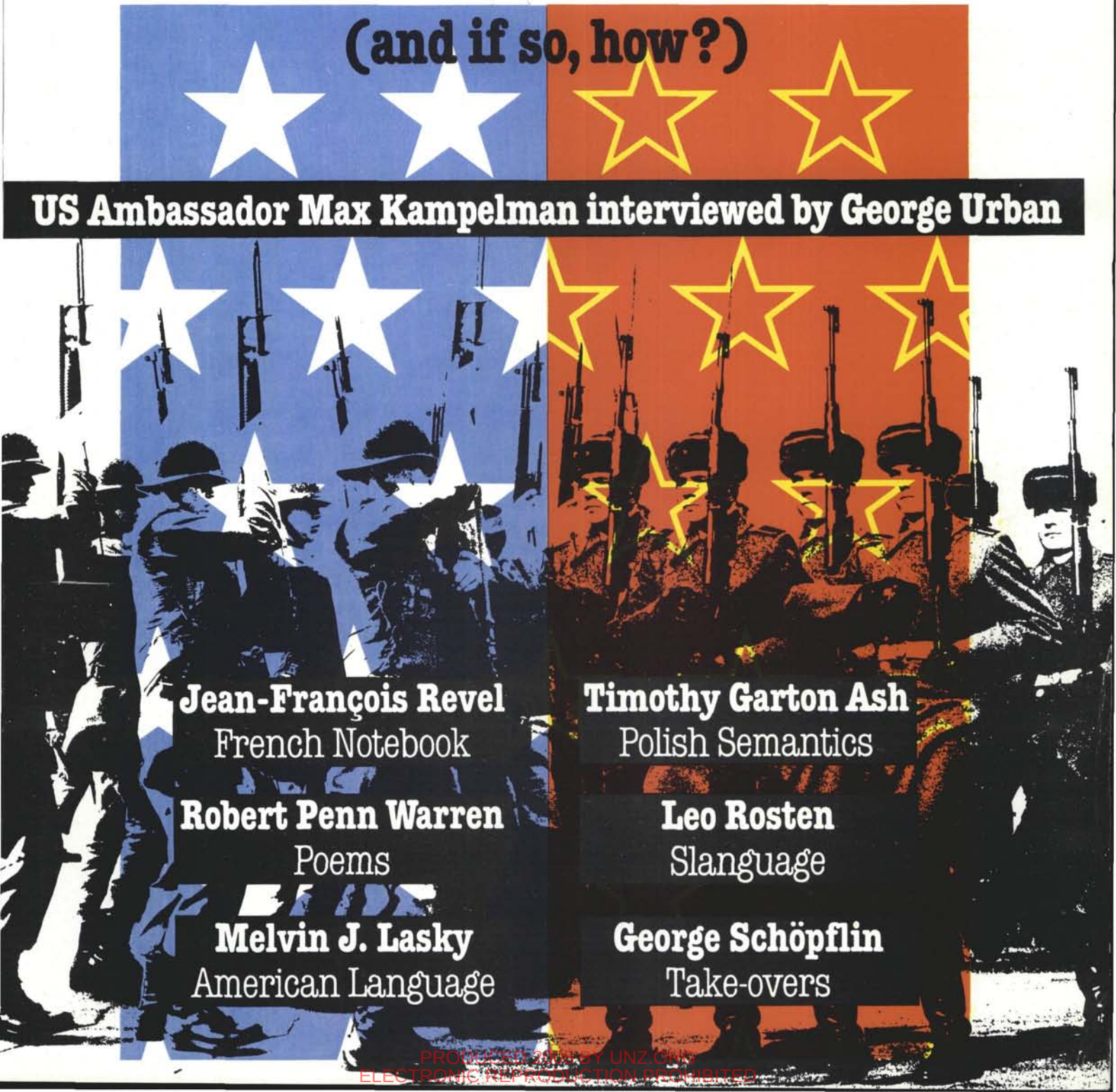

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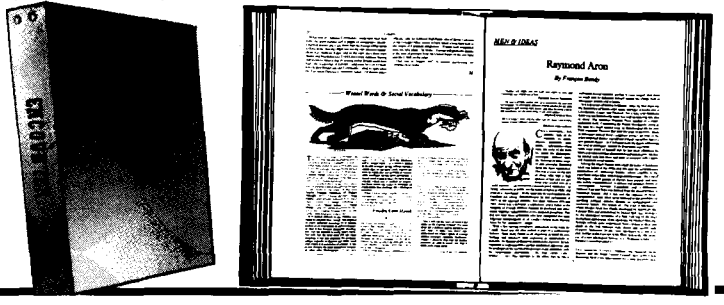

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FEBRUARY 1985 VOL. LXIV No. 2 ISSN 0013-7073

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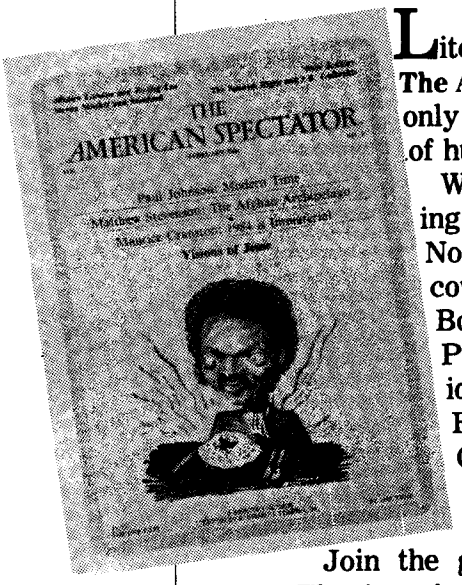

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Jim Crace

Electricity

"NEGLECT", says Awni, the Rest House warden. "For one hundred years we have been neglected. Now we are remembered!" And who claims credit? Warden Awni does. "My petitions worked the trick", he says. He displays carbon copies. Anyone is welcome to read his fawning paragraphs, to Ministers and Civil Servants. Now the town supplicant has turned braggart. "You will be pleased to learn that electrical power is to be installed in your town during the Dry", informs the framed ministerial letter which Awni has tacked to the verandah wall. The Rest House is amongst the first dozen buildings to be equipped with sockets and fittings.

We know better. Awni's petitions are not the cause: they are too frequent and too disperse. He petitions for a road surface, for a petrol licence, for a landing strip, for the removal of the school teacher ("Honoured Minister, we have amongst us one who, like a kittle beetle, disseminates anxiety . . ."). He petitions for a transfer elsewhere, to the town or the coast or the salt lake resorts. He is ignored. No, it is the Minister's personal secretary who deserves our gratitude. His neighbour is land-owner Nepruolo. They own adjacent houses in the city's New Extension. They have vacation cottages on the Mu coast. Their wives are stalwarts of the same club; their children bicker at the same school.

We can construct their conversation: Nepruolo calls upon his neighbour to present a basket of fresh candy gourds "grown on my land in the Flat Centre." Our land. "They would be larger and sweeter", he says, as the Secretary's children sever the fruit from the creeper and slice the crisp white flesh. "But . . . well, do not let me bore you with farming talk. Without good water pumps during the Dry, the gourds take siesta. Electric pumps are best, but we have no electricity, so . . . small fruit." The Secretary squeezes a lime over his crescent of fruit and commiserates: "*I* should not want land there without electricity . . . but if there were electricity then the thought of a small gourd farm with a comfortable lodge is attractive." "Land I can provide cheaply to a friend and neighbour", says Nepruolo. "Electricity I cannot." The Secretary enjoys his fruit. Soon he will have larger, sweeter candy gourds of his own. He will add another document to the Minister's endorsement file, with a pencilled cross for his signature. He will stamp the document "PP1" (top Project Priority) and then he will talk terms with Nepruolo.

All that Awni can construct is his letter of thanks. Copies are tacked to the verandah wall. "Honoured Minister and Friend, We thank you for the gift of Progress through Electrical Power. . . ."

GOOD TO ITS WORD, the government has erected pylons. It has laid cables. It has wired the hospital, the school, government buildings, Nepruolo land. In a few weeks we will have electricity. The Rest House is to be hung with glass lanterns in lemon and green and orange. "They will be mangoes of light", says Awni. "Mangoes of light all along the verandah." Electricity becomes familiar to us, domesticated as shining mangoes.

More strange are the electricians, clean workers with hard fingers, who have come from the city in neat trucks and taken up noisy residence in Awni's best rooms. Hear these men sing and argue as they work! They bury flayed mechanical limbs of wire deep into wall plaster. They handle the tendons and sinews, the long red arteries, the blue veins, with the intimacy of surgeons. The children stand close to dive and wrestle for snips of wire and plastic which fall to the ground. How will it be, they ask, when the Minister and the President of the Company arrive to switch on the current? Will the electricity flow like water, first lighting dull lamps and spinning slow fans close to the generator, then running through those thin and shiny filaments to the police station, the school, along the Rest House verandah—mango by mango—until it reaches the hospital to drip and spurt, like a farmer's furthest tap, amongst the sick-beds? Not like water, explain the electricians. "But strong and all at once."

The children do not understand. How can electricity be instantaneous, no sooner in the town centre than on its fringes? How can it be so heedlessly rapid when it has been so slow, when it has taken so many years to reach us here at all?

"Which is nearest to your brain, your nose or your

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arse?" tease the electricians. Children slap their noses. "But which can you twitch first? Let's race. Boys, be noses; girls, be bums. And when we say *Now* send a message from your brain, to twitch and shake. Who will win?" Boys and girls—and old men, too—twitch and shake. The noses cannot beat the bums. "So now you understand", say the electricians. "It takes exactly as long for a message to travel from here to here" (an electrician's fingers span the prettiest girl's face from forehead to nose) "as it does from here to here!" (Now he stoops and stretches, touching her buttocks and head.) "Electricity is like that. Like a message from the brain, no sooner sent than received." The President of the Company presses a lever and every light on the verandah will shine. The hospital will be bright as soon as the police station. The fan in the schoolhouse will turn no sooner than the wheel of the water pump on Nepruolo land. At home that night, by candlelight, mothers and fathers gravely twitch and shake for their educated children.

"BEWARE OF ELECTRICITY", says the schoolteacher. "You will become addicts." His comments are directed at Awni who has been polishing his mangoes and listing the electrical equipment which he has ordered (cheaply and furtively) from the electricians: a modern ice-box, table lamps, a liquidiser for expensive drinks. "Kittle beetle", he says, but the teacher persists. He has lived in the city; he has travelled abroad and trained in Denmark. He is playful in the European manner, joking but not laughing. He alone in the town has lived with science and light. "Beware, beware."

What must it be like to have sharp, strong light at hand, on the flick of a finger? To have cool fresh air fanning the Dry mid-days? To have ice in every drink? To be visited, like other towns, by the cinema truck? "Addictive", repeats the teacher. He recalls for us a day in Denmark. "I was reading in the conservatory", he says. "I was alone in the house. Jens was teaching. Lotte was teaching. Their children, Christoffer and Kirsten, were at school. I was being economical at the request of the Minister of Power who complained daily in the newspapers and on the television that Danes had become reckless with electricity. All that comforted me was a fire, a radio and a reading lamp." He shows how the appliances were ranged around him, how leads led to plugs, how plugs fitted tightly into sockets on the Jorgensen walls. He demonstrates with a saucer how the energy disc on the electric meter was spinning as gently as a seed mast, its calibrations individually distinct. The saucer turns precariously on the teacher's finger.

"There was nothing I could do", he says, "to stop that disc from spinning; eating power, eating money." If he disconnected the lamp and fire and radio still the flat, metal monitor crept anti-clockwise, notching up amperes on the digital display. Elsewhere in the Jorgensen home gadgets slumbered, drip-fed by electricity: the fridge, the fish-tank, the door-bell, the telephone-answering machine, the yoghurt-maker, the deep-freeze in the garage, the kitchen clock, the water-heater. (With the naming of each item we beg for explanations.) "But if I could not stop it", he says, "then I could make it go fast. One flick at the side of the electric fire with my toe. More heat! And the energy disc begins to trot. What fun we would have when the children came home. Christoffer, Kirsten and I had devised an experiment."

At last the twins returned from school. Christoffer was apprehensive. (What if his parents arrived mid-escapade?) Kirsten was over-excited and impatient. She wished to begin immediately, haphazardly. "But I insisted on scientific strategy and order", says the schoolmaster. "We started in our own rooms and worked outwards and downwards to the spinning disc in the conservatory. Everything electric, from lights to typewriters, we set in motion." He traces a quickening circle in the air with a chalky finger. He grins at the memory. The energy disc was gaining speed. Bedside lamps, electric blankets, convector heaters, a tape-recorder, a train set, a sewing-machine. The downstairs rooms were the most prized. Kirsten was the first to lay claim to the clamorous appliances in the toilet and the laundry room. The washing-machine embarked upon its longest, most warlike cycle. The tumble-dryer barrelled a tornado of hot air. The water-heater catered silently for pipes. Towel-rails and steam-irons shared overloaded sockets with sun-lamps and electric tooth-brushes. Kirsten was too small to reach the toiletry cabinet. The schoolteacher was summoned. He opened it and handed down her father's shaver and her mother's hair-dryer. They dangle-danced from their high socket on springing cords, bouncing, blowing and chewing at the bathroom rug.

Christoffer was busy in the Jorgensen living-room. "Table lamp, standard lamp, fire, television", he yelled, patiently turning silence into buzz and buzz into roar. "Stereo, video, radio." And then, to the shudder of a rudimentary, over-amplified chord, "Guitar!"

Now they hurried to reach the kitchen: cooker, toaster, mixer, grinder, blender, carver, polisher, sweeper, dish-washer, kettle. Another radio, another fire, another small television set. Fountain. Fairy lights. At last, they were done. Together, they despatched the garden mower down the lawn. At the extent of its lead, it tugged and growled at the free, long grass beyond its reach, like a tethered, liverish goat. The house and garden were a powered cauldron of heat and light and sound.

How did the spinning disc survive this onslaught? The teacher lowers his voice and leans forward to tell. "It had disappeared", he says. "It was moving so fast that we could no longer see it. I climbed on a chair and tried to view it from above. But no, nothing. Only the faint smell of scorched metal and a cloudy smoking of the glass." This is the point—with the teacher high on the chair, the twins holding their ears and laughing, the

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Jorgensen home clamouring like a nightmare—where Jens and Lotte returned. "We screamed our explanations. We retraced our routes and unplugged. We picked the fibres from the shaver; we unpicked the keys of typewriters; we replaced the scorched towelling on the ironing board; we rewired the lawn-mower; we patched up the burns on Lotte's hand (she had leaned on the toaster); we apologised to neighbours; we blushed. But, now, here is a mystery. Once the house had cooled and quietened, still the energy disc was missing. The Jorgensens said it must have disintegrated at speed, like a meteorite, and its flaming pieces had fallen into the working of the meter. Certainly the digits on the ampage counter never budged again. But I can't accept so prosaic an explanation."

We look to the teacher for *his* explanation. But he is being playful. He has none. He is teasing us, that is all. "Soon", he says, "thanks to Awni's obsequious petitions, this town, with its oil lamps, its hand pumps, its long nights, its stillness, will be a powered cauldron of heat and light and sound. It will spin with electricity. And it will disappear."

AWNI HAS CLOSED the solemn inner room of the Rest House restaurant to all but electricians. He will give no explanation. Guests, travellers, and those townspeople with time and money, now eat and drink at crowded tables on the verandah. It is marvellously successful: stranger jostles with stranger; titbits are exchanged; trays of food are passed from hand to hand to inaccessible tables; whispers are inaudible, everybody shouts.

"Be patient", Awni tells his customers. "Soon these inconveniences will be forgotten and my rooms reopened. . . ." But those on the verandah are not listening. A bat-moth is flapping wildly amongst the tables and customers are trying to read its sign. It pauses for an instant of rest on a plate of pomatoes and is caught. An upturned glass jug—hastily emptied of water over verandah floor and customer shoes—is lowered over the moth's arched black wings. The eaters and drinkers gather round and wait. For a minute or so, the moth strikes the jug with its wings, and quivers—but then it quietens, spreads itself across the fruit, and plays dead. Now the customers are as equally still and silent. All eyes trace a line along the bat-moth's body and down its red-tipped tail spike. The spike is pointing at the policeman's wife. The moth is telling her fortune. She counts the grey smudges along the moth's still back: seven children! She measures its wing-latch: long life! She peers closely and nervously at the four black wings: the love wing, the money wing; the pleasure wing are perfect. But one hind wing is ragged at the edge, an injury. "Bad health", says the policeman's wife. She lifts the glass jug and the bat-moth flaps and spirals once again amongst the tables.

"Soon these inconveniences will be forgotten", repeats Awni, striking at the moth with his hand. But still his customers are not listening. Now the policeman's wife is standing with her back against the shuttered window of the restaurant (her face lit like an actress by the bending flames of candle and lamps) and is singing.

The night is warm,
The night is long;
We are alone, alone, alone.

There are tears in the electricians' eyes as they stand at their table on the verandah and raise their glasses to the singer. These are the times that their grandfathers spoke of: music, food and good humour. "Soon", says Awni, "there will be improvements."

IN DAYLIGHT, the verandah becomes a workplace. The electricians rest their reels of wire against chairs and spread their drills and screws and fittings on tables. They are working on the electrification of the inner room and on its preparation for the opening ceremony. Warden Awni has tacked a notice (hand-decorated and lettered by a calligrapher in the city) on the verandah wall: "The Warden of this Rest House, in pursuance of his Honoured Duties towards Residents and Travellers, announces that, to mark the Advent of Electrical Power, Modernisations are in process with all the Urgency required to secure their completion in time for the Visit to these Premises of our Friend and Benefactor, the Minister, and Representatives. . . ."

Who can read any further without first resting, drawing breath and sneaking forward to explore within? None of the townspeople, certainly. Curiosity impels them along the verandah to the open door, through which electricians are passing with the fussing preoccupation of weevils in cake. There, just as Awni has promised, is the box of glass mangoes, dull and disappointing. A wooden crate, the size of four coffins, contains what the children have identified as a small white truck. It is the new ice-box. Cartons of cola and beer and fruit drinks await refrigeration. Table lamps with New York skylines as a friezed motif are packed in shredded bark. A liquidiser gleams beside its newly fitted socket. And against the far wall is a square, flat box, as wide as a demon's cartwheel. "This is my centrepiece", says Awni, but will say no more. "It is the world's largest petition", suggests the teacher. "Awni is respectfully requesting the provision of a wetter climate. Next time it rains Awni will take the credit." But the children know better. They have climbed on tables and peered into the open top of the box. Inside are a set of aeroplane propellers, cut from the heaviest, the most polished and tiger-grained tarbony, each blade the height of a man.

There are no secrets in this town ("At least, none that we know of"). So when Awni banishes all the children

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from the verandah and herds them at the rim of the Rest House land with the youngest and cruellest of the electricians to stand guard, we all leave our homes and our fields to join the crowd and call out, "What's the fuss? What are we missing?" "Keep back", says Awni. "You'll find out in good time." "Find out what? Won't you tell?"

Awni closes the door from the verandah to the restaurant. All we can hear now is the hammering and chipping and nailing of electricians at work. He stands with his back to the door facing out over the verandah towards the crowd. The youngest and the cruellest electrician can control children with stern words but he cannot hold the crowd. It edges forward until it lines the verandah steps.

"What's the fuss, Awni?"

"There is no fuss. *You*'re making the fuss. Go home!"

"What's going on?"

"Nothing . . . improvements. . . ."

"What improvements? Why can't the children see? What are they making for you in there? An electric woman?"

Even Awni laughs at this.

"Listen", he says, coming close to us. "Be patient. You see these?" He points to the petitions and lofty announcements which decorate the wall. "Now this town is on the map. We have electricity. Soon the road will be made up. Then we will have an airstrip, a cinema, a radio transmitter, a factory, our own abattoir. But first we have electricity . . . so let us be ambitious, let us have the best electricity in the world. Let the Minister come here and see how we excel with electricity. Then he will nod and say to himself, 'Ah, that town has vision. Send engineers, send aeronauts, send projectionists, send radio operators, send industrialists, send slaughtermen. Send money. Turn that town into a city!' "

"But what are you hiding, Warden Awni?"

"I *will* show you", he says. We crowd behind him as he throws back the door to the inner room of the restaurant. Inside, the electricians are standing on chairs and tables, their arms lifting and pushing towards the ceiling.

"Let us see. What is it? What is it?"

A thin girl crawls past Awni into the room and walks into the centre of the circle of electricians. She looks up and then returns to the crowd at the door.

"They're fixing the propeller to the ceiling", she says. "They're making an aeroplane."

Awni stands aside for us all to enter and admire. "It is my gift to this town", he says, "to mark the visit of the Minister and the installation of electrical power. It is the largest, the finest fan in the land."

The last screw of the fitting which attaches Awni's fan to the ceiling is tightened. An electrician pushes against one of the huge polished blades. It turns resentfully, unpowered, its tip nearly reaching the restaurant walls. Its shadow, cast by the light from the verandah windows, is a huge black moth. "Solid wood, solid metal", says Awni boastfully. "A monumental fan."

THE FIRST TO ARRIVE is the Minister's Secretary. His black Peugeot has been dusted grey by the journey over bad, dry roads. He has seen maned deer, quibbling flocks of ground-thrush, a mesmerised bandicoot caught mid-carriageway by the engine roar. He sees gnawed gourds and damaged saplings—the work of Baird tapirs and their comic snouts. All good pot-animals, and sitting targets, too. The thought of land here becomes more attractive. The comfortable family lodge with a small gourd farm transforms into a hotel for hunters, weekend marksmen keen on game but untempted by treks and danger and patience. Is there profit here, good business? When he first sees the Rest House he becomes more certain. This is no competition for his hotel: it is a timid, wind-swept little coop in wood and plaster, badly situated and poorly equipped. What idiot arranged for the Minister to switch on the current from there? Tin-pot town. Tin-pot people.

The Minister's Secretary waits in his car a field's distance from the Rest House. Soon the army jeeps will arrive with the soldiers and ceremonial equipment. The Secretary is free to scheme. Later that day he will investigate Nepruolo land and select a good site, close to the road and the police station, but wind and neighbour free. Electricity has come; the gourds will fatten. Nepruolo will be kept to his promise. Land-owner and Secretary, as ever, will see eye-to-eye—particularly as they now share interests in the same town. A newly surfaced road—now, that would benefit both. Remove those potholes. Lay that dust with tarmac. Weekending huntsmen, purses full and game bags empty, speed to the country: they pass brimming convoys of Nepruolo trucks delivering plump-as-dove candy gourds to city wholesalers. The Secretary can see it all. He will speak dreams to his colleagues, the Secretaries of appropriate ministries.

Once the jeeps and the black car draw up outside the Rest House the crowd begins to gather. They will wait all day for the Minister to arrive. They babble and laugh and miss nothing. The Minister's Secretary is perplexed. He turns to the commander of the six soldiers for explanations. "What are they doing?" he asks.

"They're shaking their backsides and snitching their noses."

"And who is this?" Awni has come out on to his verandah and begun an oration.

"Honoured Minister and friend", he says. "We welcome you. . . ."

"Not yet. Save your prostrations. I am not the Minister. I am his Secretary."

Awni beams and clasps the visitor by the elbow. "Then we have corresponded", he says, and points to his gallery of documents. "I am Warden Awni. Here is my petition for electricity, you remember? And here, today, is the outcome." He raises his arms in self-congratulation and swings the newly-hung glass lanterns in yellow, green and orange. "But I cannot claim all the credit. The Minister, too, deserves our thanks. . . ."

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The Minister's Secretary begins to wonder whether he is the victim of some subtle irony. "These people?" He indicates those few in the crowd who are still racing bums and noses. "What is the point which they are making? Who are they?"

"Townspeople, Secretary. They have come to admire the electricity and the Minister."

"Yes, but what is this shaking?"

"Ah", says Awni, happy to provide the simple explanation. "They are sending messages from their brains. No sooner sent than received. Like electrical power!"

Now the Secretary is convinced that his hotel will have no competition. The Warden of the Rest House is as mad as a mongoose. Perhaps it would be politic—just for the day—to lock him out of sight. The Minister is a man not keen on aberrations. But the Warden has hurried off, busy with preparations and self-esteem. The Minister's Secretary is left to deploy his soldiers ("Subdue those shakers. Let no one pass") and then spy out his land. Soon the ceremonial will be over and business can begin.

THE MINISTER has arrived in a motorcade of limousines, windscreen-wipers rinsing the dust. This town has never known so eminent, so punctilious an assembly. But why so quiet? All that the townspeople can hear—they are roped off and distant—is the commotion of Awni's servilities. He introduces his guests: he indicates his fan, his table lamps, his ice-box, the coloured verandah lights, bright with polish. He applauds his foresight and planning: there is the liquidiser already filled with unmixed cocktail, its sweet gourd, mint-water, cheap Japanese whisky, salt and sayoot powder, impatient for a powered whisk.

But except for Awni the inner room is stiffly silent. The guests are tightly packed. They cannot circulate and chatter. They do not like to jostle and shout to friends with the Minister so near. What can electricians say, in whispers, when pressed so close and warmly to the President of their company? How can the policeman's wife amuse the unsmiling pressmen and photographers when she cannot stretch her arms and sing? How intimately, how cunningly, should land-owner Nepruolo address the Minister's Secretary now that they are wedged shoulder to shoulder: as a neighbour, colleague, friend, partner, collaborator? As a stranger? Schoolteacher, policeman, barrack captain, town doctor, bullock-gelder, merchant's wife—all are close-tongued.

"Let us get on", the Minister commands an aide. The Minister is not impressed by fans and liquidisers. What he loves most is the privacy of his limousine.

It is now night. The townspeople stand, roped off in moonlight. The last wild flames are snuffed on candles and oil lamps in the Rest House. The Minister makes a brief speech. He has had the personal satisfaction, he says, of fighting and winning the political battles for the electrification of forgotten communities in the Flat Centre. It is a project close to his heart. How he wishes that government business was less exacting—then he could act with lizard-impulse and accept Warden Awni's generous offer of a few days rest amongst the fine people of the town. (Here, the Minister discharges a smile for the policeman's wife.) But, no, he must settle for the lesser pleasure of service and duty. He must return shortly to the city. But first. . . . "Let me leave you with a fond memory of your Minister." He grasps the ceremonial power-switch and pulls.

It is startling how light can shorten distance. The Rest House—now a grid of hard white with a diadem of coloured lamps—has leapt towards the townspeople. Every face at the window of the inner room is distinct. Every word is clear. Even the far fields have closed in, defined by the stipples of illumination at the school, the hospital, the police station, and on Nepruolo land. The town has shrunk. Only the sky and dawn seem more distant.

Awni's guests are a little startled, too, though not by electricity. Most of them have stood before in false light on visits to the city. No, they are startled by Awni's liquidiser which slices into action almost before the lights have penetrated to the corners of the room and thrown shadows over blinking faces. They all turn to stare at the liquidiser, labouring them a cocktail, and there is laughter. Applause, too.

It is a magic charm. Tongues are loosened. Electricians shake their President's hand. Pressmen smile at tradesmen. The merchant's wife—"not for the first time", it is whispered—offers her cheek to the bullock-gelder. The Minister discharges more smiles for the policeman's wife. Nepruolo and the Minister's Secretary embrace. It is a celebration.

"Now we are remembered!" calls Awni through the open window.

Bald men, and women with naked arms, are the first to notice that the wind is rising. The room shivers. Cigarette smoke speeds back at the smoker. Cocktail glasses rattle. "There will be rain" or "The moon is belching" or "Expect a birth in town tonight", comment the superstitious. The rest button their jackets and send Awni to close the shutters.

BUT THE BREEZE DOES NOT ABATE. Now it buffets the inner walls and hammers a passage between the guests. The squall is blowing from within.

"My fan!" says Awni. "I had forgotten."

How could he forget his centrepiece, his gift to the town? It has responded slowly to power—its wooden arms too broad and heavy to rotate freely. It has spun like a seed mast, gradually picking up speed, gradually herding and pocketing the air in the Rest House. Now it is in command.

"That *is* a large fan", says Nepruolo. "It's as wide as the room. . . ." All conversation has stopped and Awni's

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fan is the centre of attention. "Minister", demands Awni. "Have you ever seen such a fan before, in all your travels, in all the fine buildings you have visited. . . ?" "Never", says the Minister, thinking of the discreet, silent air-conditioning in his own office, home and car. "I believe this fan to be unique."

"I dedicate this unique fan to the Minister", declaims Awni, "in thanks for the provision of electrical power. . . ."

The guests—their faces chilled and rosy from staring windward—feel obliged to applaud both Minister and fan.

Still the giant blades are gaining speed. They shovel air from the heights of the room and pitch it at the heads of honoured guests.

"See, see!" cries Awni, blocking all escape through the verandah door. "Now everyone is cool. Feel how cool we are!"

The fan's shadow, cast darkly across the ceiling by electric light, beats and flaps, reaches and dips, like a flail-dancer, spinning faster and giddier. The fan has outstripped electricity: it is self-propelled, driven by its own turbulence. Clothes tug tightly on bodies, eyes are lashed with tears, plates and glasses tumble from shelves and shatter, as squall gusts into gale and gale into cyclone. Who there does not fear the electrical storm?

"One place is safe", says the Minister, putting his arm around the policeman's wife with the intimacy of an uncle. "At the hub." They labour against the blast and stand as close as doves in the narrow column of stillness directly beneath the fan.

"It is simple physics", explains the Minister, relishing the plump songstress in his arms. "Locate the eye of the storm and escape all turbulence. Here, we are quite safe."

Their fellow-guests recede further from them, flattened and crouching against the Rest House walls. Those who dare watch the ceiling, but they can see no fan. It is moving so fast that it has disappeared. They cup their eyes against the wind and look again. But no, nothing. Only the faint smell of scorched wires, and a cloudy smoking of the air.

The first indication that the storm has peaked is a crack in the ceiling. The second is a shower of crumbled plaster: half settles lightly on the Minister and his ward, half is pulled into the windy vortex and turned into stinging grapeshot. The third is a sharp detonation. The ceiling can no longer withstand the weight and pressure. It releases Warden Awni's fan. A blade hits the Rest House wall and splinters into a thousand needles of best tarbony. The cyclone is armed.

"Switch off the current", commands an electrician (he and his comrades are squashed safely behind the restaurant counter). But too late. The jagged vanguard of needles reaches the guests. Splinters of tarbony slice flesh and chip wall-plaster; missiles of wood lacerate the New York skylines of table lamps and shatter bulbs; a salvo strikes the ice-box; a single, knotted bolt of timber finishes the cocktail, showering electricians in mint-water, whisky and liquidiser. What remains of the fan kicks and cracks against the ceiling and then, snapping its wiring, falls. The Minister and the policeman's wife—those two doves at the eye of the storm—receive the great weight of the wreckage. One by one, the mangoes on the verandah smoke, burn, and fail. Now the only light is the occasional flash of a pressman's camera.

THAT MOONLIT VERANDAH . . . what travellers gather there, now that the Rest House has closed and we have the Huntsman Hotel with its garden bar, its pool, its patio restaurant, its cane settees and glass-topped tables? Bats, lizards, goats, ghosts. The children dare not venture too close; their parents, nervous of cracking timber and sagging walls, warn against the truculent spirits of electricity. Awni—turned shopkeeper—petitions for compensation, restitution, revenge.

The schoolteacher is more forgiving. He has time on his hands and his own stool at the Huntsman bar.

"It is a simple matter", he says, lifting the patch to display the contour of scars across his eye. "The fan was too large and wilful. It ran too fast." A saucer turns precariously on the teacher's finger. "That little Rest House could not take the pressure. The fan disintegrated at speed, like a meteorite."

Visitors from the city see the logic of this—but the townspeople, avoiding those places where electricity is installed, cannot accept so prosaic an explanation.

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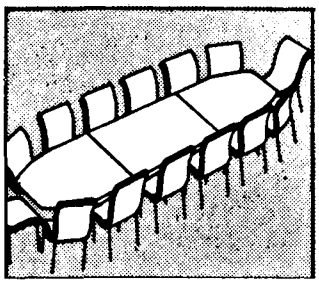
Can We Negotiate with the Russians?

(and if so, how?)

MAX M. KAMPELMAN in conversation with GEORGE URBAN

1. From Helsinki to Madrid



URBAN: *Critics of "the Helsinki process" frequently suggest that it is wrong and demoralising to resume negotiations with a power that has violated, in almost every particular, an agreement it solemnly signed as recently as 1975. George F. Will wrote in "The Washington Post":*

"As the Western public becomes used to the sight of Western and Communist diplomats deliberating about freedom of expression, travel, trade unions and other matters, the public concludes that the people talking so earnestly, for so long, share a political vocabulary and frame of reference, so the Helsinki process spreads a fog of false, but soothing assumptions."

Others have argued, especially in Reagan Administration circles, that the very act of sharing a negotiating table with the Soviet Union—after the Soviet aggression in Afghanistan, the suppression of "Solidarity", the accelerated build-up of the SS-20s, and the arrest of the Helsinki human-rights monitors—was an act of assuring the Soviet leaders that their international credentials stood unaffected, and that the West was prepared to deal with them as equals even if it could not grant them a clean bill of health. It was, as the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" put it, an act of helping the Soviet Union to "polish up its image" at a time when it was sorely tarnished.

At a more general level, critics have been warning us that this is no time to confer an extra dimension of respect and "legitimacy" on the Soviet leadership—no time to mislead Western public opinion into thinking that compromise, give-and-take, the spirit of live-and-let-live are part of the Soviet leaders' mental equipment as much as they are of our own, and that we could convert them to our ideas if only we mustered the better case and deployed the better argument.

Are the critics right in saying that the whole negotiating process, from Helsinki to Madrid, suffers from these faulty assumptions—that the psychology they generate undermines our public perceptions of what the Soviet Union is about and how it proposes to achieve its objectives?

KAMPELMAN: I share the diagnosis as to the totalitarian nature of the Soviet Union, but I disagree with the prescription. I believe in dialogue and negotiation. We recently completed the Madrid agreement during which we met with the Soviets for three years. That agreement did not demoralise our forces in the West, nor did it in any way "polish up" the Soviet image. On the contrary, we were engaged in active political struggle for "hearts and minds", and did a great deal more "tarnishing" of the Soviet image than we could have done by absenting ourselves from the forum. It is not the negotiating process that confers the "equal" status; it is Soviet military power that provides it. As to "respect" and "legitimacy", we effectively challenged both in a respectable international forum.

Let me also say that had we decided not to sit down and negotiate with the Soviets, we would have separated ourselves from the real forces in Western Europe, abdicated our responsibility to our European friends, and abandoned the field of political competition with the Soviet Union.

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He was a close associate of Senator Hubert Humphrey during his long career in Washington (and was his legislative and political adviser when Humphrey was Vice-President). Like Mrs Jeane Kirkpatrick, he is "a life-long registered Democrat", and thus one of President Reagan's "bipartisan" appointments. He served as Adviser to the US Mission to the UN from 1966-67, and since 1983 has been Consultant to the State Department.

GEORGE URBAN'S *recent contributions to* ENCOUNTER *include conversations with Alexander Zinoviev (April 1984), Jeane Kirkpatrick (November 1983), Eugene V. Rostow (April 1983), Daniel Bell (February 1983), W. Averell Harriman (November 1981), Zbigniew Brzezinski (May 1981), Leszek Kolakowski (January 1981), and Milovan Djilas (December 1979).*

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In addition, we would have added credibility to the Soviet propaganda campaign which alleges that the United States is "not interested in negotiating." I have given this matter much thought, and I fail to see how it would have served our interests had we refused to sit down with the Soviet Union.

On the question of "legitimacy"—that issue was decided by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933 when the United States recognised the Soviet Government. The fact that one recognises a power by no means implies approval of its philosophy, or acquiescence in its policies, or legitimacy of its objectives. It is this important distinction that the free world must understand if we are going to be effective in competing with the Soviet Union. If we isolate ourselves from this battle by insisting on purity, on not sullying our hands, we put ourselves in a position where we become an irrelevance and add to the very power we are trying to contain.

We do recognise the Soviet leaders as the *de facto* rulers of a substantial part of the world. We recognise them as a significant military power. If that is what the word "legitimacy" means, then we recognise that the Soviet Government has it. But it is a legitimacy based on police and military power alone, rather than "the legitimacy of consent."

Now, if we had sat down to negotiate with the Soviets and *not* raised their violations of Helsinki (and of SALT), then, of course, it could rightly be said that we were also legitimising the violations of the Helsinki agreement. But this is not what we did.

The challenge to us is to recognise the *de facto* legitimacy of Soviet power but to challenge the legitimacy of that power's behaviour. That distinction has to be understood, and I think we have the important task of educating Western public opinion to comprehend it.

THE QUESTION *I am trying to explore is whether, by sitting down to talk with the Soviets as "bona fide" neighbours, we are not telling the world that we share with the Soviets a moral universe as well as a planet.*

KAMPELMAN: I repeat: that we recognise the Soviet system as an existing Government and to do business with it does not mean that we approve of it. We are engaged in a dynamic power-struggle with it for the future of certain forms of society (and, perhaps, the future of mankind). I find it difficult to believe that anybody who examines the record of our negotiations in Madrid can interpret it as a measure of approval of Soviet policies. What we have done, for example, in Madrid was consistently to criticise the Soviet Union for being an aggressive power, for violating its international commitments, for its anti-Semitism, and so on.

—I have been watching the American role, and especially your personal role, in the Madrid process with the greatest admiration. Week after week, for almost three years, you arraigned the Soviet Union in this "world court in continuous session" (I think the phrase is yours) with lucidity and eloquence. Seldom before has the Kremlin's ideological duplicity been more tellingly exposed.

KAMPELMAN: But had we not gone to Madrid, that world forum would not have been open to us.

—Yes, but might it not be argued that your impressive rhetoric was a substitute for an active policy?

KAMPELMAN: If Soviet totalitarianism could be effectively changed by a wave of the wand or by non-participation in the negotiation process, it would have been far better to try to change it in that way rather than to make those 80 speeches that I was called upon to make. But I do not know what realistic alternative we had that would have been in our general interest. I spent many hours, believe me, analysing this problem and was unable to come up with an alternative that would have satisfied me.

What was the negotiating position we took? We decided to strengthen the Western Alliance by recognising that our West European friends, who share our values, were geographically in the forefront of confrontation with the Soviet Union; that they were concerned about a nuclear catastrophe; and that they were, therefore, in no position to "ostracise" the Soviet Union—indeed they had been doing the very opposite.

Any effort by us to persuade them to ostracise the Russians—assuming that we were ourselves persuaded that this was the right way to proceed—would have failed. We would have (as I say) isolated ourselves, and to that extent weakened the Euro-American Alliance.

ARE YOU IMPLYING *that, apart from the United States, the rest of the Alliance was on the other side of the fence? I suspect that the British Government might well have gone along with an alternative policy (perhaps "masterful inactivity") even if certain other* NATO *members might not.*

KAMPELMAN: I am concerned that there is not a single West European Allied Government that would have been willing to be held responsible for destroying the Helsinki process—which would have been the effect of non-participation. This does not mean that our European Allies were unaware of the nature of the Soviet Union, but that they understood the importance of being perceived to be always willing to talk and negotiate with the other side.

Consider NATO's 1979 "dual-track" decision on the Pershing and Cruise missiles. At that time it was necessary for the Alliance to reaffirm its willingness to enter into discussions as a condition for going ahead with the military deployment. In other words, the pressures for "talking to the Soviet Union" were there in 1979, that is *before* the Madrid talks began. . . .

—You are really talking about the German Federal Republic now, are you not?

KAMPELMAN: NO—I am talking about Germany only as one of several West European countries. It is a mistake to assume that Bonn is alone in holding the views I describe. Germany has considerable influence and has, in Herr Genscher, a capable foreign-policy leader with a strong mind. But the views the

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Germans entertain in this matter of negotiation are common to France, Italy, the Scandinavian countries and others too. I spent time in London and discussed this matter with diplomats in the British Foreign Office. I must assume they reflected the views of the Prime Minister. Given all this, I recommended to the US Government that we put our weight behind the Helsinki-Madrid process.

Containing and counteracting Soviet influence takes many forms. I was anxious that we should not abandon the political platform, the public opinion debate, the information front. I felt certain that Madrid could provide us with the necessary forum to advance our Western interests.

CRITICS DO NOT QUITE SHARE *your view that Madrid was a good forum for undermining Soviet influence. Leopold Unger, for example, records a whole list of reasons why the Madrid document is a two-edged sword. In reality, he says, it is more likely to damage Western interests than to promote them. He complains that the human-rights discussions, due in Ottawa and Bern, which might prove embarrassing to the Kremlin, have been put off until 1985 and 1986, whereas the Stockholm disarmament conference is taking place right now, making it possible for the Soviet Union to promote its various "peace" initiatives. Not once, he writes, is Poland mentioned in the 40-page Madrid document, although the conference took place in the shadow of Polish developments. Nor, he argues, is mention made of those persons in the Soviet Union and Poland who have been imprisoned for monitoring the observation of the Helsinki agreement.*

KAMPELMAN: There may be a certain heroism in "going down fighting", but I would much rather win battles. It is doing us all a disservice to minimise the fact that the Soviet Union found itself thoroughly on the defensive in Madrid. The Madrid process did not at all serve Soviet interests, unless we believe that just the fact of an agreement does so. I believe, for reasons I have detailed, that the Madrid concluding document, with its reiterated and expanded assertions of human values, is in our interests. The criticism that it did not in its text specifically name Poland or individual dissidents is inexplicable to me given the impressive effort made in their behalf by the West. We must not hand the Soviets a victory they have not won and do not deserve. This would be shooting oneself in the foot.

WHAT CRITICS LIKE *George Will and Leopold Unger have been trying to argue is quite simple: don't trust a man who has repeatedly made a fool of you. I would have thought their views are well expressed in the American proverb: "Cheat me once—shame on you. Cheat me twice—shame on me."*

KAMPELMAN: I respect that view, but we do not in that sense trust them. The long-term objectives I share with George Will and Leopold Unger are: try to undermine Soviet totalitarian society, reducing its influence. We should hope for a thaw, a "liberalisation" or humanisation of that system, if that is at all possible. Now, if those are our hopes, we must try to achieve them in ways that are open to us: and that means using the international political process. We are not involved in an abstract ideological crusade; we are involved in a political competition for power and influence.

Mind you, there *is* another position which says: it was all right to go to Madrid as long as we used the conference as a forum in which to hit them hard, but we should have stopped prior to the point of an agreement. I can understand that point of view; it is a valid theoretical alternative; but it does not, alas, have any relationship to reality. We could have followed that course if we were just writing a "scenario", or if the Soviets had refused to satisfy some of our substantive requests at the negotiating table. Had we refused to concur in the final result once the essence of our demands was met, our good faith as negotiators would have been undermined, much to our damage.

Over the past year we have been deploying our Pershing and Cruise missiles, to help restore a certain balance of power, the new imbalances of which had so alarmed Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. Complete deployment is by now not just a military issue, it is also a symbolic feature of NATO's unity and determination. Certainly our European Allies told us that putting ourselves in a position where *we* were the ones who would not want to go ahead with negotiation and written agreements would make it much more difficult to make the deployment of these missiles acceptable to West European public opinion. We could not be unconcerned about that result.

SOME CRITICS CONTEND THAT *the West could have said: "We shall not come to terms with you based on the words of this agreement alone—we insist on your 110,000 troops getting out of Afghanistan." Or, "We insist that the 51 Helsinki monitors be released from jail." Wouldn't these have been reasonable requests fully covered by the ten principles written into "Basket 1" of the Helsinki agreement?*

KAMPELMAN: Yes, these would have been legitimate demands. The 35 states that signed the Helsinki agreement assumed certain obligations about respecting the sovereignty of other nations and abstaining from aggression, not only against one another, but with respect to all countries of the world. Therefore, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was clearly in violation of the principles of the Helsinki agreement.

This was a controversial question. We *were* very much tempted to go down the road you indicate. In the end we came to the conclusion that insistence on Afghanistan and the imprisonment of the Helsinki monitors would have made it impossible to carry our Allies with us and thus take advantage of those substantial concessions which the Soviets had to make in the course of the negotiations. Rather than accomplishing a Western goal, we would have assisted the Soviets in the direction of accomplishing one of theirs: Western divisiveness. We

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did push for and achieve some "gestures", but they were quite limited.

The absence of an agreement would have meant that there wasn't going to be a follow-up conference dealing with "confidence-building measures" and "surprise military attack." The new provisions improving human-rights clauses would also have been lost. So we settled for the provisions and for less on performance. History will judge whether our call was correct.

The issues of Afghanistan and the Helsinki monitors were regrettably unattainable in the Madrid context. That is why the US introduced the issue of humanitarian gestures. Some humanitarian gestures (such as the release of the Pentecostals) have already been made by the Soviet side, and I hope more will follow.

MAY I RAISE TWO POINTS? *You will recall that the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia did not stop "détente." In 1968 "détente" suffered a temporary setback but picked up again soon after the suppression of Dubcek's Czechoslovakia and culminated in the Helsinki agreement. Why did this happen? Because, in the late 1960s and the 1970s, the will to have a substantial relaxation of tensions with the Soviet Union was shared on both sides of the Atlantic.*

But in the early 1980s this was no longer so. "Détente" was and is substantially dead. Couldn't the invasion of Afghanistan and the suppression of Poland have been used by us as opportunities for suspending the negotiations "until further notice"? You need not have alienated the European Allies by saying "No" to the Helsinki process. It might have been sufficient to sit back and do nothing (as, in fact, you did for a limited period) pending a change in Soviet behaviour.

My second point is unrelated to the first but relevant to the question in hand. You once told me when we met in Madrid that you were unhappy about the apparently increasing divisions within NATO. *You suggested that the President of the United States should consider proposing to the heads of all Allied governments a summit conference to consider "what to do about* NATO." *Were the formulations of the 1949 treaty still relevant? Did the Allies continue to see the Soviet Union as a threat to their independence and democratic social order? Should the United States still keep its forces in Western Europe? Did Europe want a different world-order from the one envisaged by the decision-makers of 1949?*

In other words, you were expressing your concern about the drift within the European side of the Alliance, hoping to shock the Europeans into reconsidering their policies.

Now *you seem to be referring to the rather dovish attitude of the West Europeans in the matter of the Helsinki process as your justification for not pursuing a crisper line towards the USSR. Isn't there a discrepancy between these two attitudes?*

KAMPELMAN: I don't think there is. The suggestion I made to you in thinking aloud was that, if NATO was to continue to experience the strains from which it is now suffering, it was time for us to sit down to re-examine NATO's utility in its present form, either with a view to reaffirming it or with a view to reforming it. That is still a very relevant issue. On the other hand, NATO is not an institution which ever accepted dictation from the United States: dialogue between the member states must take place. Surely Americans have an obligation not only to say our piece but also to listen to our Allies.

After the imposition of martial law in Poland the NATO countries came back to Madrid (in February 1982) and said that they were not now going to do "business as usual" and negotiate. We made it plain that we were going to use the Madrid forum to criticise the violations of the Helsinki Final Act by Polish repression and the Soviet pressure on Warsaw. And we did. After a few weeks of this, we agreed to a recess until November 1982. But the question you are raising is: Why did we come back in November and resume the negotiations?

The United States was returning to Madrid at the end of the agreed-upon recess, but we were widely and correctly seen as not wishing to be "negotiating as usual." Our European Allies disagreed with our apparent unwillingness to talk. They were telling us that public opinion in their countries required negotiations; that public opinion understood condemnation but it would not understand attending a conference and then not wanting to finish it constructively.

We then had a series of meetings among ourselves—first in Norway, then in Portugal, Luxembourg, and Brussels. These resulted in a proposal by our Allies that when we returned to Madrid we should resume the negotiations but not on a "business-as-usual" basis. It was suggested that we reflect in our negotiating posture our outrage at Polish martial law through a series of new demands, such as a provision on free trade unions. It was on this basis that we went back to the negotiating table in Madrid in November 1982.

—Yet Poland is not mentioned in the Madrid agreement.

KAMPELMAN: Of course not. It was never considered by us that Poland would specifically be mentioned. You have to realise that in the Helsinki process nothing goes forward unless it is by consensus. Warsaw is one of the negotiating parties and, quite clearly, Poland would never agree to the mention of Poland in the Madrid document. We did not seek it, and it would have been foolhardy for us to have expected it. Our effort was rather to try to reflect the issues presented by the Polish experience, unmistakably but in a manner that had a chance of being adopted.

We did that in several ways. One was the trade-union provision in the final document; another was our amendment on religious freedom; there was also a series of further amendments resulting from the suppression of "Polish pluralism." The time to be specific about Poland by name was at the round-table. We did so. The meeting was the forum to influence public opinion. This was the political battlefield.

I supported that approach. We maintained Allied unity, and then went on to obtain Soviet textual concessions and produced a full document. I believe we were effective with European public opinion by pointing out that we went to Madrid to try to settle issues with the East through negotiations, but we highlighted the repressive nature of the Soviet Communist system during the negotiating process.

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2. From Kissinger to Kampelman

WOULD I BE RIGHT *in suggesting that the whole idea of putting our names to a negotiated agreement was to neutralise the so-called West European "peace" movement and get those Cruise and Pershing missiles in place? You must have been conscious of the threatened "hot autumn" and the "freeze" movement in the United States. Weren't those the real targets of the Madrid compromise?*

KAMPELMAN: They were important targets.

—A sop to European public opinion?

KAMPELMAN: No, not a "sop", but an essential move to win over public opinion. Washington saw the Madrid document as a way of competing with the Soviets for West European public opinion—to help those elements who are friendly to us and deter those who are against us.

But the Madrid agreement went beyond this issue of deployment. We always have to bear in mind our ultimate problem—how best to deal with the Kremlin, how best to contain its influence and deter its expansionism. We endlessly discussed "the nature of the Soviet system" and hammered out a Western view which we all share. We also have agreement among us in NATO on the need to undermine Soviet penetration if we possibly can, because we all share a sense of being threatened. But we are still left with the ultimate question of how to carry out our objectives. Of course, as we have said and commentators are repeating, the Soviets and the Poles are still suppressing free trade unions and doing reprehensible things. Repeating this does not address the basic challenge, important as it is to remind people about the facts.

The fundamental question is: what can we do about Soviet behaviour that can be effective? That is what preoccupies me. We cannot hope to influence Soviet policy without great military strength, and military strength cannot be had without the support of public opinion. If Madrid meant taking a step in lining up public opinion behind us, then we have achieved a great deal.

—Just before the Helsinki agreement was signed I published a hefty volume on "détente." It was my considered view then that our approach to the Helsinki process rested on some fundamental ideological misapprehensions. Some of our opinion-makers said that the Soviet system was, for all practical purposes, akin to our own: that the Soviet leaders were Western-style politicians with foreign accents; that the Soviet Union's long revolutionary history and expansionism could somehow be undone by appending a signature to a piece of paper. The act of negotiating a document of good behaviour with a power that stood for global revolution and the extinction of "class enemies" and "hostile social orders" was, I argued, a questionable enterprise.

KAMPELMAN: At the time of Helsinki I also felt that it was an unwise enterprise and said so.

It is too soon to tell what history will conclude about the Helsinki process. My own view is that in Madrid we successfully turned Helsinki around—to our advantage. We learned to use the instrument. I believe it can work; and if it does, I will say that I was wrong in 1975. The Europeans I have talked to since—and *they* were the ones responsible for "Basket 3", not the Americans—never had any illusions that changes could take place in the Soviet Union suddenly or quickly, just because the Kremlin had signed a piece of paper.

What they hoped was that civilised standards to strive for would be established and norms of responsible behaviour would be set. Those objectives have not been reached. That fact does not, of course, mean that the norms are unimportant. My point is that if the new generation of Soviet leadership should come to believe that it is in its own interest to begin to liberalise its system and that it can survive some of this humanisation, then perhaps the standards established in 1975 in Helsinki and 1983 in Madrid will prove to be useful.

We cannot, however, base the justification of Madrid on that hope; nor on the hope that the Soviet leadership will respond to moral considerations—they do not. They respond to *power* considerations. But power considerations may, if we create the right context, lead them to take some of our moral requirements into account. I am not too optimistic about this—I only say that there is some possibility that it might happen. So long as it does not, the standards are available to be used by us in the international debate, in the "war for hearts and minds." This is very important.

In 1975, I thought that we had in Helsinki given an unnecessary triumph to the Soviet Union. My job in Madrid was to turn a possible earlier setback into a victory. I don't want to abandon the political struggle, and that is why I don't want to withdraw from the Helsinki and Madrid process. I don't want to assume that we can't influence public opinion throughout the West and the Afro-Asian world. We have to do everything we can to get on the wavelength of public opinion so that they can hear what we are saying about the nature of the present Soviet régime.

Had there been a way of counteracting Soviet influence by non-participation and non-agreement, I might well have moved along that line. But there wasn't.

HAVEN'T WE BEEN THROUGH *this kind of exercise before? When the appeasement of Hitler was the dominant strain in West European thinking, our politicians and media-men let it be known that Hitler was, at heart, a reasonable man—the sound and fury of his rhetoric were meant (it was said) for internal consumption; we could have peace with him if we satisfied legitimate German aspirations, and so on. Aren't we now making a similar error?*

KAMPELMAN: You keep asking and returning to this question

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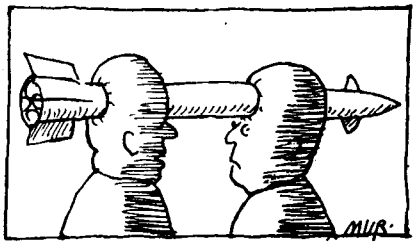
which I have already answered. There is a risk—but it is not an unreasonable one. In any case, we have not been saying that the Soviet leaders are nice chaps because they wear shirts and ties and know how to use cutlery. In Madrid we have been saying the opposite. We have been demonstrating in direct and clear language that the Soviet system is illiberal and repressive, and we have repeated it over and over again. If people choose not to hear that part of our message or to misunderstand it, I don't know what we can do about that. I believe our message has come across. That is why, just as the Madrid document was about to be approved, I made a very stern speech in Madrid (18 July 1983) in which I told the representatives of the Russian

Power & Superpower



"The elementary means by which all foreign policy must be conducted are the armed forces of the nation, the arrangements of its strategic position and the choice of its alliances. In the American ideology of our time these things have come to be regarded as militaristic, imperialistic, reactionary and archaic. The proper concern of right-minded men was peace, disarmament and the choice between non-intervention and collective security."

THESE WORDS *were written by Walter Lippmann 40 years ago but they accurately describe the trend of American foreign policy in the wake of the Viet Nam defeat in the early '70s. That defeat was accompanied by a period of Western appeasement which resulted in a dramatic expansion of Soviet influence into Laos, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, South Yemen, Libya, Syria, Zaire, Madagascar, Seychelles, Nicaragua and Grenada. To that must be added a continuous decline in the self-confidence of the Atlantic Alliance and a faltering in the purposiveness of United States policy in the Middle East and Central America.*

Mr Ronald Reagan was elected president in 1980 on a clear platform to restore America's strategic confidence by increasing its defence strength and discontinuing these policies of appeasement. Throughout his first term every effort was made by the Soviet Union to prevent that occurring. The Soviet expansion continued, as did the intimidation of America's formal and informal allies.

FORTUNATELY **the American electorate held its nerve, as did the Alliance—just. The cruise missiles were installed. The allies refused to be bullied into making any concessions simply to resume negotiations broken off unilaterally in a fit of pique by the other side. By September it was clear that the Soviet Union had begun to adjust to the failure of its diplomacy. Mr Gromyko visited Washington in recognition of Soviet assumptions that President Reagan would indeed be leading the Alliance for the next four years.**

After his re-election there is now a recurring and world-wide attempt to induce President Reagan to change the policies and attitudes on which he has twice been elected to represent his country. That is not surprising given the persistence of Soviet diplomacy. Soviet leaders work to long rhythms which outpace the historic breathlessness of Western electoral timetables. Soviet leaders exploit their advantage and they are helped in this, not always unconsciously, by the pervasive cultural refusal in the Western liberal establishments to recognise and accept the hard simple principles of Mr Reagan's leadership for which he received such decisive confirmation in the election, against all liberal hopes and predictions.

THIS PRINCIPLE *is the reassertion of American power and self-confidence and an end to appeasement. So why is it that now, after a second endorsement, there is so much pressure for change? One can see it even in Dr Kissinger's recent article in "The Sunday Times", where he starts by deploring the fact that "for too long presidential elections have led to reassessments of American foreign policy" and then contradicts himself a few paragraphs later by suggesting that "the deepest significance of Reagan's second term is that it has liberated the US to undertake in a climate of conciliation a long overdue reassessment of the basic assumptions of its foreign policy." Double-speak indeed.*

THE DEEPEST SIGNIFICANCE **of Reagan's second term is that it has indeed liberated the United States. It has liberated it from the incubus of a period of détente and appeasement which was thought by most commentators to be the new and settled orthodoxy, as Lippmann had perceived it to be in a previous phase. It has liberated the United States by providing it with the opportunity to consolidate the Reagan policies of the first term without being undermined by persistent attempts to prove the ephemerality of those policies, their lack of substance and durability. In other words there should be no change. There should be no "reassessment" suggesting any revision of Mr Reagan's basic principles. His opportunity is now to show the world that he is consistent and that his policies, when he leaves the stage, will have had an eight-year period to unfold without the disadvantage of some so-called mid-term "reassessment" undermining those principles to which he has stuck throughout his first term and for which he received the electors' approval for a second.**

In the light of the proposed Shultz/Gromyko meeting in the new year what should this mean?

Mr Reagan has always, quite rightly, indicated a willingness to talk, but from a position of strength. That combination must be maintained. The Soviet Union respects strength as much as it exploits weakness. It will try every trick in its book to use such discussions to undermine American strength and repair some of its own strategic weaknesses. We should thus examine the Soviet position with care to be continuously aware of those weaknesses and determined on the need to perpetulate them.

TOO OFTEN *in the détente period, the response to so-called Soviet insecurity was an expression of western guilt leading to some reduction in our strength as though it would be possible, in the words of Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick:*

"to control anybody's aggressive behaviour by taking care not to frustrate them unduly in the first place."

Appeasement is based inevitably on wishful thinking about the people whom one is trying to appease.

SOVIET SOCIETY *is mobilised for war, both a shooting war and a class war. Since the Geneva Conference of 1922 Soviet officials have been currying western economic assistance to make up for their strategic weaknesses while their leaders have used double-talk to conceal their aggressive intentions against the free world.*

However, the Soviet Union desires the fruits of war without the risks. That is the basis of Mr Reagan's main opportunity now. There is a common interest in avoidance of nuclear war and therefore in avoiding any rituals which might lead to one. That gives ample room for tactical manoeuvre.

First, there is much to discuss to remind the Soviet Union that its relationship with the other major nuclear power cannot be pushed too far in peripheral non-nuclear settings without eventually jeopardising the

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régime once again exactly where we stood with them. And I did it precisely because I didn't want Madrid to be the source of any euphoria in the West about the nature of Soviet give-and-take. I didn't want anyone in the West to be misled by the idea that the leopard had changed its spots.

Now maybe what we did was not enough. Perhaps the risk you suggest is more than a risk—perhaps it is the reality. History will judge that. Personally, I have seen no signs of euphoria. In my opinion, our societies have a very sober understanding of the Soviet system. People are not saying that we have returned to a period of *détente*; much less do we have any Neville Chamberlains in our Western leaderships. But if you

mutual concern they both have for the prevention of nuclear tensions. It has to be made clear to the Soviet Union that their persistent struggle in these peripheral areas makes it necessary for the United States to maintain and improve its strategic nuclear superiority over Soviet capabilities.

SECONDLY, *this common desire to avoid nuclear war must affect negotiations about such new nuclear systems. It is thus important for Mr Reagan to persist with the "Strategic Defence Initiative." That is the underlying source of pressure on the Soviet leadership. It has brought it back to the negotiating table and it should not be eased up unless and until a decisive arms-control arrangement is identified. Such an arrangement must include significant reductions in arsenals but only achieved on the basis of clear principles of equality and cast-iron guarantees about verification. Nothing else would be satisfactory. There is no strategic security in a succession of diplomatic nods and winks. Thus the refusal of Washington's bureaucracies to come clean now about the record of Soviet arms control violations does not augur well for the conclusion of any agreement which will command real, as against rhetorical, confidence.*

However, persistence with the SDI and President Reagan's other major defence programme has even more profound implications for the Soviet-American relationship. As Zbigniew Brzezinski, former head of Carter's National Security Council, has observed, the Soviet system is a world power of a new type,

> **"in that its might is one-dimensional. It is a global power only in the military dimension but in no other. It is neither a genuine economic rival to the US nor—as once was the case—even a source of a globally interesting ideological experiment."**

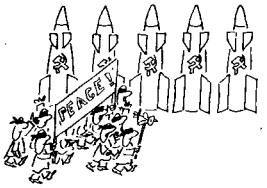
The Soviet economy is in the throes of a long historic decline. Professor Cyril Black of Princeton has noted that the Soviet Union, in spite of all the suffering, killing and social disruption of the last 65 years, occupies no higher rank in the table of world social and economic indices than it did 20 years before the Revolution.

THE FULL IMPLICATIONS **of this decline are not likely yet to be apparent to Soviet leaders—and with such a mendacious and self-serving bureaucracy beneath them, why should they expect to be told these uncomfortable truths?**

However, the Brzezinski conclusion is that Soviet military power, while progressively unable to challenge American power on the basis of equality (let alone to impose its one-dimensional character on the world as a kind of Pax Sovietica) will nevertheless continue to disrupt existing international arrangements. The Soviet interest will be to undo the stability of the free world system. It will operate at the sub-nuclear level by continuing to foster greater international anarchy where it suits Soviet purposes in stimulating terrorism, insurrection and uncertainty in those areas which are regarded as politically valuable or sensitive to the West.

THE CHALLENGE *facing Mr Reagan, therefore, is to see that such disruptive behaviour goes unrewarded. He must not be seduced either by Soviet diplomacy, or by his own officials, into thinking that the prize of an arms-control agreement justifies overlooking these disruptively offensive tactics elsewhere. Consequently the West under his leadership should exercise the most rigorous constraint on any economic benefits to the Soviet Union which encourage or facilitate its military adventurism. There should be no exchange of strategic technology, or know-how, or concealed and unnecessary assistance to the Soviet military economy by, for instance, the grain deal which in 1972 not only involved a 300 million dollar subsidy but contributed to a substantial Western inflation of grain prices.*

For such a policy of economic discipline to be applied, Mr Reagan has to enlist the active support of his major industrial allies in Europe and Japan. The leaders of those countries share a general assessment of Soviet policy. They could be ready for a concerted approach given clear leadership from President Reagan and greater evidence of teamwork and coherence in those parts of his administration concerned with developing grand strategy.



ABOVE ALL, *and in the light of the Presidential election, the West should now approach the Soviet Union with increased self-confidence. From that should flow a refusal to be bullied. Indeed there is a case for a change of attitude which suggests some element of counter-offensive against the long assault on our values by the Marxist-Leninists. This is already apparent at the detailed level of* NATO*'s tactical military planning but there are subtler avenues to pursue.*

We must organise and coordinate our policy to achieve greater differentiation within the Soviet system. There should be differentiation between the Russian peoples and their Soviet masters; between the East European peoples and their Soviet occupiers; between the Soviet signature at Helsinki and their abject failures to honour that signature (from the barbarity of the Berlin Wall, the constant jamming of Western broadcasts, to the refusal of elementary civil rights to their citizens); between their professed desire to take part in international security structures and a chronic refusal to share knowledge about how their own decisions are made.

Unless the West can monitor their political processes with the same freedom as the Soviets do ours, there can be no question of mutual security. We cannot yet do so and the Soviets show no sign of recognising that fact. There can thus be no genuine security between us and the relationship must remain based on this inherent danger.

DIFFERENTIATION, *verification and vigilance. Those must be Mr Reagan's watchwords. He must rely on firmness of purpose and clear principles. It would be fatal to change course now in response to pressures to restore the dangerous illusions of the period of détente in the 1970s. The Soviet Union is showing a positive reaction to President Reagan's policy of increasing American military strength. He should not now allow his dealings with Moscow to develop into a weblike system such as Dr Kissinger tried to weave, to the point where the system became an end in itself so that the United States was deprived of the freedom to apply strict conditionality to each and every individual act of mischief perpetrated by Soviet hostility.*

That freedom must be preserved if the United States and its allies are to be able to cope with a system which operates on an inherently outmoded, malevolent, discredited and dishonourable ideology: an evil empire indeed.

Leading article in

***The Times* (London)**

(EDITOR: **Charles Douglas-Home**)

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ask me: Is there a risk? Yes, there is a real risk of repeating the illusions of 1973-75, the illusions of a one-sided *détente*.

MAY I REMIND YOU *of Dr Kissinger's view? Henry Kissinger explains in his memoirs that his dual-track policy—strength on the one hand, and "détente" on the other—appeared to make no sense to the average American. Americans, he tells us, have no understanding of or liking for "power politics" or even "Realpolitik." They could not see how you could pursue a tough policy towards the Russians on the one hand, as the pre-condition of talking peace and cooperation on the other.*

If American public opinion is really such that it cannot understand a sophisticated policy of that kind, then—Kissinger says—there is no hope that the United States can pursue a coherent policy in world affairs. Hasn't Kissinger's complaint some relevance to your own twin-track diplomacy?

KAMPELMAN: Yes, there was a lesson to be learned, and I think we have learned it.

In the 1970s the American President and his representatives consistently argued that peace was at hand. They spoke of this "relaxation of tensions" as a magic formula which would usher in a new age. Now, if the current US leadership propounded a similar view, one might understand why the American public would make the same mistake, assuming that peace and reconciliation with the Soviet Union were around the corner. But this is not so. The American leadership and its negotiators have absolutely refused to mislead. Indeed, we kept insisting that there is *no détente* now. Of course, I cannot tell with absolute certainty that our double-track policy, offering diplomatic negotiations in a context of ideological candour, has been understood by the public, but I am convinced that proper leadership will produce a favourable public response. (The recent Presidential election results are surely a case in point.) Furthermore, if we pursued the military approach without trying to negotiate with the Russians at the same time, we would not only fail in Europe, but lose support in the United States as well.

IS IT NOT THE CASE, *though, that the American people will not support heavy expenditures on rearmament unless they are convinced that they are being threatened? Directly threatened, and also indirectly via client-states in the Western hemisphere. If the Kissingerian complaint is correct, and another public confusion over words is to be avoided, Washington may well be tempted to use a heavy brush to depict the character and intentions of the USSR.*

KAMPELMAN: I don't find that confusion. I am not persuaded that Dr Kissinger fully understood American public opinion. That was not his strength. The Nixon administration oversold *détente* and told the American people that peace was at hand. For one thing, it wasn't true. For another, the Soviet leaders were never really ambiguous about *détente*, although they tried their best to mislead us. We were living with wishes, not reality. Today American public opinion is again more realistic about the nature of the Soviet Union and the importance of the balance of armed power. The debate in Congress was whether we should have a 5% or 8% increase in our arms expenditure, but it is not a debate as to *whether* there should be an increase. And if we were not still having a troublesome unemployment rate, I don't think that debate would even be a serious one. True, there is a "peace" movement in the United States, but even that movement now talks soberly about *verification* because it realises that the Kremlin régime cheats.

The essential point is the argument of deterrence—the argument that we need arms in order to make it unprofitable for the Soviet Union even to consider threats and adventures.

In Western Europe, deep-seated support exists for *Solidarity* and Polish pluralism. American public opinion, as well as that of Western Europe, has repeatedly stood up for the Sakharovs and Shcharanskys. We have to be careful, however, not to put ourselves into a position where it could be said of us that to support *Solidarity*, the noble Russian dissidents et al., means supporting "war." That is what the Russians are trying to communicate to Western Europe. We have to refute that position.

—A sophisticated argument. . . .

KAMPELMAN: And I hope it will work.

—But how certain are you that it will have an impact on the general public?

KAMPELMAN: All I know is that illusions about *détente* have apparently not been reawakened. I do not hear many people saying that the Soviets are being cooperative and peaceful. Both American and West European public opinion are well aware of the nature of Soviet totalitarianism and clearly understand the military threat, in spite of the nervous fear of war.

—I suspect the Europeans understand the Russians better than they do the Americans.

KAMPELMAN: I agree we are not understood, and that we contribute to not being understood. We also make mistakes. I would not want to defend the Caterpillar decision or the decision on the pipeline deal, because I believe that if economic warfare can be successful, we should not disdain it. I did not support our lifting of the grain embargo without getting anything in return. I have no objection to engaging in any kind of competition, short of a shooting war.

On the other hand, I have no liking for competitive contests I am likely to lose. If we had turned away from the negotiating table—if *we* had been the ones not coming to an agreement in Madrid—West European public opinion and the world press would have lambasted us for simply not wanting to have any dialogue with the Soviet Union, and that would have done great damage to Western unity and to missile deployment.

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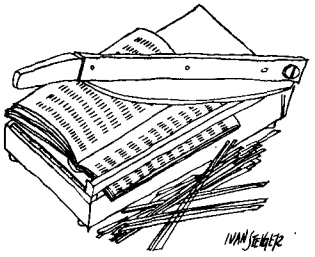
3. From Cold War to Chilly Bargaining



May I now come to the actual text of the historic Madrid agreement? I invite you to imagine what a political prisoner somewhere in the Soviet Union might think of it. Would he say: "I am being mistreated in this clinic every day—I am injected with drugs—my jailers abuse my human dignity. Yet, until I heard about the Madrid agreement, I was holding out, because I believed I had allies in the Western world. But now it appears that the people who have been sustaining my courage—the Americans, the British, the French, and the other Western powers—have sold out to my captors. If they themselves have had to come to a compromise with the Soviet system, how can I hope to defeat it? The Madrid document appears to have this message for me: I'd better make my own compromise, because all the cards are stacked against me. . . ."

Is this what our unfortunate political prisoner would be thinking?

Or would he rather say: "My only chance of getting out of this hell is to exploit the pressures put upon my captors by the Western nations in Madrid"?

KAMPELMAN: I believe you overstate the case, for I think you will find both points of view prevalent. You know the dissident movement as well as anybody is likely to know it. But dissidents do not think or philosophise alike. They have different viewpoints, and different degrees of sophistication.

I have had a rather active exchange with dissidents in the Soviet Union and their friends in the West. Some have been saying to me: "Why are you letting the Madrid meeting come to an end? While it continues you are helping to defend us on the human-rights issue. That continuation is important." I point out to them that we have arranged for a number of follow-up meetings so that the accountability process continues. Other correspondents in the Soviet Union urge me to do everything possible to keep the "Helsinki process" alive, because Soviet authorities would welcome an opportunity to blame us for destroying it. Keeping the Helsinki values alive gives them hope.

I can see how certain dissidents may feel that the fact of a Madrid agreement has let them down, even though the document reflects Western standards. That saddens me, but I understand it. They may think that they have been "sold out" because Madrid ended and they are still in jail. Shcharansky's wife, for example, feels that we should not have agreed to anything until her husband was released.

I can, therefore, see both sides of the argument. We had to make our own call. At some point we had to make a decision, one based on the best information and the most responsible judgment we could muster. What we have done may disappoint some courageous dissidents, but it will please other sincere opponents of the Soviet régime. I could only do what my judgment and conscience led me to do.

—Don't you think that the two reactions I have tried to describe go for the captive nations as a whole with almost equal force? After all, they too are "political prisoners", multiplied by the millions, and they too might say: "It is time we made our peace with the Communist régime, seeing that the Western Governments, too, seem to have no alternative but to come to terms with it." Or they might say: "Our only chance of keeping or enlarging such areas of freedom as we have managed to carve out for ourselves is to hold the Communist régime to its words according to the Helsinki process."

KAMPELMAN: I am sceptical that your first analogy would apply to the East European peoples. According to my reading, the East Europeans are extremely pleased that the Helsinki process has been kept alive, but there will be follow-up meetings on security, surprise military attack, human rights, and so on. They don't want a war of the Superpowers. Their preoccupation is with trying to get increased areas of liberty in their own societies, to improve their standard of living, and to challenge Soviet authority and repression.

For my own part, I cannot see myself encouraging anyone to go to jail. I don't want to spur anyone to be a martyr of totalitarian society. To do so, or not to do so, is primarily a decision that must stem from the individual's conscience. If an individual does make the decision to resist, I would want to congratulate him for his heroic qualities of character, but I don't want to encourage liberals and democrats and other protestors to sacrifice themselves.

As far as the global power struggle is concerned, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania are members of the United Nations. They are states we have recognised; we have exchanged Ambassadors with them for many years. That in itself confers a form of legitimacy, as we discussed earlier; with the Soviet Union we crossed that threshold in 1933. We recognise them diplomatically, but we must be prepared at the same time to challenge the moral legitimacy of totalitarian régimes.

But in a brutally power-political world might not compromises like that of the Madrid agreement be a hindrance to the success of your policies? In June 1983 Yuri Andropov, then the Soviet leader, said that our time is

> **"marked by a confrontation, unprecedented in the entire post-War period by its intensity and sharpness, between two diametrically opposed world outlooks, the two political courses of Socialism and Imperialism. A struggle is going on for the minds and hearts of billions of people on our planet."**

I think we can safely subscribe at least to the latter part of that analysis, as indeed President Reagan and Mrs Thatcher, the British Prime Minister, have repeatedly done. . . .

KAMPELMAN: I agree with that. . . .

—But if that is so, isn't it in the Western interest to make sure that the peoples of Eastern Europe remain unreconciled to their fate and never allow Moscow or the local régimes to feel that their rule is anything but tenuous? In that case, mightn't Madrid have done us a disservice?

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KAMPELMAN: Madrid has not done that. Indeed, Madrid has said to these people—particularly with the help of the Western radio stations (and other forms of communication)—that we hold their Governments accountable for the international agreements they have signed. We have for three years systematically mentioned the names of dissidents; we have raised issues of human rights in all East European countries; we have talked about the Charter 77 group in Czechoslovakia, and so on. Let's assume that the Helsinki process broke up. How would the peoples of Eastern Europe be any better off? They wouldn't even have this forum in which we can put pressure on the Soviets on behalf of our Western principles. There wouldn't be a standard to which we can hold the Soviets and by which to measure their behaviour. I have no doubt but that the end of Helsinki would be looked upon by the peoples behind the Iron Curtain as a blow.

More than that could be dangerous. We must be extremely careful not to suggest to the peoples of Eastern Europe that we would come to their aid if they rose against their Governments. This was, no matter how mistakenly, believed by the Hungarian revolutionaries in 1956. I don't want to see a replay of that saddening and tragic experience.

I am persuaded that the Helsinki process has been directly beneficial to the cause of freedom in Eastern Europe. The *Solidarity* movement in Poland demanded, as one of its first political demands, that the Helsinki agreement be republished in all its details. *Solidarity* obviously felt that the "Final Act" gave them a banner, a stimulus, and indispensable arguments. I wonder whether *Solidarity*, or indeed the Pope's astonishing visit, could have taken place in the absence of the Helsinki agreement or the Madrid negotiations.

It's my hope that the East Europeans will be able to go on using the Helsinki process and take some encouragement from it. There is going to be a cultural forum in Budapest (and if any country wants to raise the issue of "cultural genocide" in the Soviet Union that is an appropriate subject). There is going to be a meeting on human rights, and another on "the reunification of families and human contact." There will be a fourth on "the non-use of force." What an opportunity all these meetings will create for not allowing these issues to disappear from the table! This year we shall have yet another meeting to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Final Act. That too will give us a chance to keep the process alive by which the Soviet régime can continue to be held accountable.

If I felt for a single moment that by not going to the negotiating table, or not coming to an agreement, we would have been more likely to humanise or liberalise the Soviet system, I would have been for it. But since that was not the case, I felt that we had to keep putting pressure on the Kremlin until they either quit the Helsinki process because they felt it was not in their interests, or observed it more punctiliously, and experienced the sharp criticism highlighting their irresponsible behaviour.

—Having read your speeches at the Madrid conference, I was surprised that the Russians sat there. Why did they not walk out on you? In the past, milder provocations have sufficed to make them remove themselves from the negotiating table.

KAMPELMAN: What I said undoubtedly hurt them, but there was good reason why they didn't pull out. They did not want to be held responsible, at that point and in that place, for interfering with the process of negotiations. It would have interfered with their peace propaganda against Western deployment. They would have loved to have *us* not show up or pull out.

—So both parties recognised that the propaganda stakes were high, and that even self-respect and "face" had to take second place to the politics of missile deployment?

KAMPELMAN: Yes, but we did not have to face the problem of "face" or self-respect; we were on the offensive and the final agreement was consistent with our approach. I am convinced that the Soviet calculations went beyond the deployment issue. In the last phases of Madrid the Soviets took it for granted that the Pershing and Cruise missiles would begin to go into place, but they have by no means given up the struggle to try to divide the United States from its Allies, reduce NATO's military standing, and generally contribute to a disorientation in Western society. They do take a long historical view of all this—and I feel we must do likewise.

KHRUSHCHEV ONCE TOLD THE WEST: *"We will bury you." But if they keep telling us self-righteously that they will bury us, why are they so indignant when President Reagan tells them that they are a focus of an evil empire? Even the most dyed-in-the-wool Soviet Communist (and there are not many of those left in the USSR) will understand that a man who threatens to kill me or "bury" me will hardly be seen by me as a man of goodwill. Rather I will see him as a person bursting with unpleasant intentions.*

KAMPELMAN: There is no question that President Reagan's phrase hurt them very much.

—But how do you explain why a cynical power, deeply versed in Leninist amorality, should have reacted to the President's observation with such a display of hurt innocence?

KAMPELMAN: Well, historians and other scholars have made the important point that what we are dealing with in the Soviet Union is not only a Leninist ideological component but also a Russian component, and that Russian component is the one that so desperately seeks respectability. If you withhold that respectability you administer an insult to the Soviet system as a whole.

I agree with that analysis. I have also heard academic friends of mine underline the point that Russian history is an integral part of understanding Soviet behaviour. But I don't feel this is an argument that I can harness to our purposes. If we identify Soviet society with the Russian character, Russian history, and Russian culture, it will tend to make the West believe that it's easy to deal with these Soviets because they are really just Russians following their normal national interests: you can negotiate with them as you can with any other competing nation. You sit down and bargain with them and come to an agreement.

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That is the danger. The fact is, of course, that it is not—or not only—the Russian ingredient that makes it difficult for us to negotiate with the Soviets, but the Leninist ingredient.

This desperate Soviet straining for respectability is genuine, whatever its source. Many of the Russian negotiators I meet find it incomprehensible that we should accuse them of all these terrible things: they want to be regarded as a world power that commands respect.

Well, I kept telling them privately (and not infrequently in public speeches) that if they seek respectability they must act in a responsible manner. I made this point repeatedly because I know that it counts with them. I am not saying that "respectability" is a factor that has a *decisive* influence on their behaviour; but it does have some impact, and that helps to explain their indignant reaction to President Reagan's charge that they are a focus of evil.

4. *The Importance of Being Patient*

SOME PARTS OF YOUR *Madrid agreement strike me as quite shaming for the Soviet Union, and I am really surprised that the Soviet negotiators put their names to it. I have especially in mind provisions dealing with the freedom (such as it is) of Western journalists and embassies to perform their missions in the USSR. For example, the agreement stipulates that the signatories will "facilitate the normal functioning of their missions"; that "access by visitors to these missions will be assured"; that "journalists wishing to travel for personal reasons and not for the purpose of reporting shall enjoy the same treatment as other visitors from their country of origin"; that they will "further increase the possibilities . . . for journalists . . . to establish and maintain personal contacts and communication with their sources"; that they will, "as a rule, authorise radio and television journalists . . . to be accompanied by their own sound and film technicians"; that "journalists may carry with them reference material, including personal notes and files, to be used strictly for their professional purposes." And so on.*

Did the Soviet negotiators not quite realise that they were signing a document that makes it abundantly clear that Soviet society is, in fact, not a very civilised society and is unlikely, short of a democratic rebirth, ever to earn our respect?

KAMPELMAN: *Of course* it is shaming for them . . . and disgraceful . . . and humiliating for them. And I think they know it.

In our committee meetings we used many illustrations to try to tell the Soviets why all these specific provisions were necessary. I remember quoting the specific case of a Belgian journalist who, when leaving Moscow, was not allowed to take his personal papers with him.

Unquestionably they were embarrassed, but they then went back to insisting on "non-interference in internal affairs." For three years they experienced public humiliations. They hated it.

—We have indeed much written evidence that they really did hate it. For example, "Izvestiya" commented (on 14 September 1983) that the American delegation was "undermining the process of 'détente' . . . sharply cranking up the arms race . . . reviving the cold war spirit and returning to the disgraceful 'position of strength' policy. . . . It is with regret that one has to recall certain forces' demagogic rhetoric about human rights." This sounds like an obvious reference to Ambassador Kampelman. Clearly, you did hurt them.

KAMPELMAN: I confess that it was our objective. But I repeat again, we did this in the hope of modifying their behaviour, in time; and, short of that, to do battle for the "hearts and minds" that concerned Andropov.

—But you said the Russians protested that we had no right to interfere in their "internal affairs."

KAMPELMAN: They used that argument, but it was totally unpersuasive. It produced in Madrid a kind of chortle running through the meeting. It had no effect.

WOULD YOU SAY THAT *perhaps the most important point about the Helsinki and Madrid documents is precisely this: that they have introduced a concept into international law whereby a great many issues that used to be regarded as "purely internal matters" for the sovereign state have become the subject of international obligation?*

KAMPELMAN: Yes, new standards have been set, and that is a fundamental departure.

—The trouble is that the Helsinki and Madrid documents are not treaties. They are non-binding, and hence their provisions are "soft-law" provisions.

KAMPELMAN: That is true, but what we have been trying to do is to turn an unenforceable document into a document with some enforceability through accountability. In other words: we took the non-enforceable Helsinki agreement—which the Soviets did not expect to have to live up to because it was not a treaty—and put a measure of accountability into it. What is more, we have put a measure of *continuing* accountability into it by making arrangements for the various follow-up meetings. We have tried to put some soul into what was just a dummy. We are in the process of turning it into a binding document by holding states accountable for their behaviour.

What Helsinki and Madrid have done is to say: "Peace is more than just the absence of shooting. Peace is the totality of the relationships we have written into these two documents. A country that makes war on its own people cannot be trusted not to make war on its neighbours."

Freedom and peace are indivisible. The strength of the Madrid proceedings is that we have taken something that some

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said was initially in 1975 a Soviet propaganda victory, and turned it round in the way I have just described. Doing so might, as you rightly observed, risk adding to the respectability and even legitimacy of the Communist régimes. We recognised that risk, and tried to counter it. The many pluses make the Helsinki process worth preserving.

—But I can visualise these very hard, cynical people in the Politburo saying to themselves: "Of course we will sign this document, comrades. We can sign it with impunity because we are negotiating with bourgeois innocents who believe in some independent, non-class-related code of ethics. We, on the other hand, are guided by the Leninist principle of morality, which teaches that morality is what is good for the Revolution and the Party, and that is for us to decide. . . ." Can't you see the Russian comrades chuckling to themselves while uttering some such sentiment?

KAMPELMAN: Oh, I can see that possibility, but it is an unpersuasive rationalisation.

—Assuring themselves that "of course Madrid means nothing"?

KAMPELMAN: I am not sure that they believe it means nothing; but naturally they might say that. Our task is to see to it that it *does* mean something.

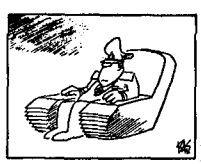
Now I don't like to build international agreements on optimistic expectations, or use hope alone as the justification of our actions in a political struggle. Nevertheless, I am sustained by the hope that at some point somebody in the Soviet system will say: "How long can we go on being isolated in this manner? Is Leninist doctrine, justifying 'wars of liberation' and 'revolutionary terrorism', relevant to a world that has nuclear arms and is threatened by nuclear extinction?"

If we go on putting pressure on the Soviet Union, making it clear that it would be highly unprofitable for the Kremlin to challenge us, somebody might very well say: "Our goals are better served if we relax secret-police controls and let these Helsinki monitors go free." Or: "We'll loosen up the stakes a bit for the sake of a better understanding with the other side", etc. This is not, mind you, an expectation—merely a faint hope; but we are looking for a crack in the hard Soviet system. We have to keep pressing before there can be any turning-point to what Euro-Communists once accepted as "an historic compromise."

Let me put it this way: I believe President Reagan really wants the totalitarian Soviet system to end, but not by war. The Soviets want to "destroy the system" in the bourgeois or "imperialist" world, and are probably willing to do so by means of war if they can prevail. On the other hand, there are large numbers of anti-Soviet critics in America and Western Europe who don't want to think about an "end" to the Soviet system because any such notion would have war-like implications in public opinion and would be considered highly irresponsible in the nuclear age. These people tend to say: "We don't want to destroy the Soviet system. What we ought to try to do is to get it softened or weakened or liberalised from within. So what we really have to do is to undermine its influence, contain it and deter it, humanise it, perhaps isolate it, and constantly put pressure on it in the hope that cracks may develop."

I respect this view even though it is not symmetrical with the ideological Soviet challenge to us.

"Evil Empire"



AS A LIFELONG philosophical naturalist and secular humanist—a favourite target of the Moral Majority—and a Social Democratic supporter of the welfare state, I take strong exception to your interpretation of Ronald Reagan's references to the Soviet Union as "an evil empire." You and Henry Steele Commager, whom you quote, are demonstrably mistaken in asserting that the expression "evil empire" is "a gross appeal to religious prejudice."

Presumably you are not objecting to the term "empire" in the reference to the Soviet Union but to the term "evil." But "good" and "evil" are primarily moral terms. In ordinary discourse, "evil" is used synonymously with expressions like "wicked" and "very bad." Could you or Mr Commager bring yourselves to assert in the light of its current treatment of Sakharov, dissidents, Jews, religious believers, national minorities and the handicapped that the Soviet Union is *not* an "evil empire"?

To be sure, the Soviet Union is not the only evil empire or national entity in the world today. Iran, in which hundreds of members of the inoffensive Bahai religion have been hanged, and several countries in Africa, and not South Africa alone, are also evil empires. The Czarist empire was "evil", even if not so evil as the empire that succeeded it. No one made any bones about so characterising it.

ONLY LAMENTABLE IGNORANCE *of the nature of the Bolshevik-Leninist mind or ideology accounts for the fear that President Reagan's accurate reference hurts the feelings of the leaders of the Soviet Union or affects their behaviour.*

Compared with the denunciatory epithets Soviet leaders have hurled against the United States, President Reagan's language is relatively benign. For years, Hitler exhausted the vocabulary of expletives attacking the Soviet Union. That did not deter its leaders from embracing him at the time of the Nazi-Soviet pact. After Hitler double-crossed Stalin, the latter turned eagerly to the help of Churchill, who decades earlier had called on the West "to strangle Bolshevism in its cradle."

Kind words or harsh words play little role in determining the Kremlin's behaviour. All the flattering compliments paid to Stalin, "good old Joe", as a democratic ally by Western statesmen when he was a co-belligerent against the evil Fascist empire had no effect on his decision to resume the cold war against the West.

THE UNITED STATES **can live peacefully in the same world with evil empires and, within limits, even do business with them. All it asks is that they live up to their obligations under the UN Charter and forgo actions like those of the Soviet Union in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Berlin, Afghanistan and elsewhere.**

There are degrees of moral evil in the world, and neither we nor our allies are free of it. But let us remember what the Commagers among us have forgotten: because no one is free of moral fault, it does not follow that all are equally at fault. We knew that when we condemned the evil empire of the Nazis. It is no less true when we condemn the evil empires of the Kremlin, South Africa, and the Ayatollah Khomeini.

Sidney Hook
in THE NEW YORK TIMES

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GOING DOWN THE MADRID LIST *of trade-union rights, safeguards for religious freedom, journalists' rights and so on—which of these, would you say, are the most important?*

KAMPELMAN: The most significant are the new provisions on "free trade-unionism" because they are immediately relevant to the developments in Poland. We need to proclaim the fact that, in the Madrid document, the totalitarian Soviet leadership and the Polish military authorities had to accept the principle of free trade-unionism because of Western pressure.

The Helsinki Final Act included no statement on trade unions. The Madrid document reflects our initiative stemming from the suppression of *Solidarity*. It clearly states that the participating countries

> **"will ensure the right of workers freely to establish and join trade unions, the right of trade unions freely to exercise their activities and their rights as laid down in relative international instruments"—**

—But this right is qualified by a provision that it "will be exercised in compliance with the law of the State." Doesn't this, potentially at least, undo much of the good stemming from the first part of that provision?

KAMPELMAN: No, because if you read the provision you have quoted to the end there follows a further qualification, which says that the signatories will act "in conformity with the State's obligations under international law." Now this clearly refers to the conventions of the International Labour Organisation which guarantee the free exercise of trade-unionism.

Furthermore, the trade-union provision of the Madrid agreement also calls upon States to encourage direct contacts between trade unions and their representatives. The West—which has always made the point that unions freely organised in the West are not to be confused with the totalitarian State-controlled organisations known as unions in the East—was able to insist successfully that this provision be applicable only to such unions as are indeed freely organised by workers and are free to function under ILO standards.

What we should be saying in our communication with Poland (and the rest of Eastern and Central Europe) is that the overwhelming force of Western public opinion is so much in support of the principle of free trade-unionism that the Soviet and East European Governments had no way out but to acknowledge it in writing. Obviously it would be an illusion for us to expect that they would now scrupulously put it into practice. But I think we have moved a step forward in civilising the international community. This is a plus. There is a plus to be derived from the establishment of standards, even if those standards are being ignored for the moment. Whether ignoring those standards will be permanent or not depends a great deal on how seriously we hold governments accountable for not living up to them.

—Critics, however, might say: "It is all very well to talk about standards. But here, for example, is the old Soviet Constitution associated with the name of Stalin, and indeed the new and present one, which sets standards so high and fair (and even 'liberal') that no one in Westminster or on Capitol Hill could take great exception to them. Yet they have been more honoured in the breach than the observance. Not only that, but the Soviet Union has signed peace treaties with the East and Central European countries as well as various UN instruments, all of which it has continuously violated. Why, then, should the standards set in Helsinki and Madrid fare any better?"

KAMPELMAN: And such critics would be absolutely correct in saying that the standards set by all the instruments you have quoted have been ignored. But again I ask myself and responsible commentators: What are the alternatives to establishing standards and insisting on accountability?

If you establish the standards and permit those who violate them to escape unscathed, then you can be rightly accused of cynicism. I choose to believe, however, that by introducing the element of accountability you are putting some life into those standards. The standards we are talking about are those of the last 30 or 35 post-War years. They received a dramatic impetus through the Helsinki process, which defined peace as something that must have a human ingredient incorporated in it. We have to be patient about this. I don't mean to say that we should not be dissatisfied about the *results*; but I don't want impatience to lead us to the point of saying that the standards are useless, and therefore let's decry them as a failure and eliminate the whole negotiating enterprise.

I welcome the criticisms you have quoted. We have ourselves been most critical in Madrid by pointing out "lack of compliance." But we concluded from the lack of compliance that we should try to inject "accountability." Others who pointed out the lack of compliance have come to a different conclusion—arguing that the whole Helsinki process should be rejected because there is no way of ensuring that Soviet society will ever comply with the Helsinki provisions. Why then, they said, go through the charade? I understand this argument; but, at the same time, I disagree with it. I know of no superior alternative that satisfies our political needs. Furthermore, in spite of Soviet recalcitrance, many of the Helsinki provisions are being lived up to in some sectors of East European societies.

But, to go back to your point about the non-observance of standards established in international treaties and indeed in the Soviet Constitution, let me say this. Sometimes the difference between defeat and victory is how one defines it for oneself. I feel that too many of us who are strong champions of democracy tend either to be so overwhelmed by the power of the totalitarian world, or become so discouraged by the imperfect way in which we are dealing with it, that we tend to *assume* defeat. This is regrettable and dangerous, because assuming defeat will help to make it a reality. Defeatism is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

A concluding part of this conversation will be published in ENCOUNTER *next month.*

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Two Poems by Robert Penn Warren

Wind and Gibbon

All night, over roof, over forest, you hear
Wind snore, shift, stir, like a dog uncomfortable
In sleep, or dreaming. You think of leg
Twitching. Paw jerking. Claw
Unconsciously scraping the wood floor. You drowse.
Wake. Decide it is only a spruce bough wind-dragging
Across the corner of the house, like a saw. Wind,
Suddenly, stops. Shifts. Again lifts. Has no mind
That could rationally dictate change. Its head
Is like a dried gourd rattling
A few dried seeds within. The wind
Is like a dream of History. Blows where it listeth.

You get up. Wander. Gibbon, you see,
Is on the shelf, volume by volume, solid as masonry. At random,
You seize one. It will be more comforting
Than the morning paper. The paper
Will gabble like paranoia, chitter in a strange tongue like
A capuchin, the organ-grinder's monkey.
You chunk up the fire. You do not hear the wind.

It does not matter where you begin. This is History.
Pick up any volume. Gibbon's hot lava
Seethes over the conical brim of the world whence
Lifts flame-tongue. Glowing,
It flows, like incandescent irony, over
Vineyard, sheepfold (but quickly soothes that
Frizzly tumult), stone hut, villa, the brawny and noble
Cockmaster about to insert the tool of wizardry, that
Merciless moan-maker. It spills
Over empires, imperial palaces, the Crusader
Whose mount is hock-bloody. *In hoc signum.*

History is not truth. Truth is in the telling.

The lava flows on. Before dawn, you sleep. This, in your chair.

Long back the wind has stopped. The world is now white.
You face west. The mountain is white with snow.
From the new sun, invisible to you, a single
Beam, sky-arrowing, strikes
The mountain to dazzlement.

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Old Photograph of the Future

That centre of attention—an infantile face
That long years ago showed, no doubt, pink and white—
Now faded, and in the photograph only a trace
Of grays, not much expression in sight.

That centre of attention, swathed in a sort of white dress,
Is precious to a woman who, pretty and young,
Leans with a look of surprised blessedness
At the mysterious miracle forth-sprung.

In the background somewhat, the masculine figure
Looms, face agleam with achievement and pride.
In black coat, derby at breast, he is quick to assure
You the world's in good hands—lay your worries aside.

The picture is badly faded. Why not?
Most things show wear around seventy-five,
And that's the age this picture has got.
The man and woman no longer, of course, live.

They lie side by side in whatever love survives
Under green turf, or snow, and that child, years later, stands there
While old landscapes blur and he in guilt grieves
Over nameless promises unkept, in undefinable despair.

William Scammell

The Right Distance

You can see how the sheep
got his star part in the book,
at once literal and symbolic.

He is a remedial learner
set inside a barrel of curls,
teacher's pet, likely to bolt,
certain to cast no casting vote.

Stones and roots are his peer group.
A polite lip, and mother's teeth.
After two more deaths I walk
in the direction of the sheep—

real sheep, believe me, who stare
at the goggly stranger standing there.
We magnetise each other
for some minutes, pass and repass
exactly the right distance between us.

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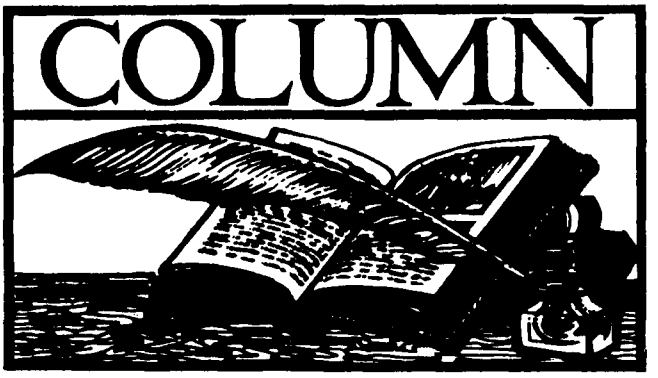

THERE'S A TREATISE to be written on *Smoking as Gesture*. The late J. B. Priestley was sardonic and self-critical about by-play with a pipe: the muffled fingerwork, filling it in the pouch; the tamping down, sometimes with a special implement; the outdoor man's cupped hands, shielding his match from the tempest; the billows of smoke; the sage, steady puffing, giving our nicotined wiseacre time to think. Harold Wilson was a past master at pipemanship. Neither he nor Priestley affected one of those patent metal versions with a sump for the goo. They likewise avoided, in public at least, laborious hygienic ritual—scraping the bowl with a blunt scalpel or a prickly grater, probing with pipe-cleaners, tapping out charred fragments of dottle, blowing wetly to clear the stem. The price of the pipe-smoker's air of wisdom is a lot of messy tinkering, plus a growing pile of spent matches.

Constant re-lighting is sometimes needed with cigars. This gives the smoker a chance to repeat his connoisseur act, pursing the lips, rolling the cigar in expert fingers to ensure it's evenly lit, drawing deeply, waving it away as if languidly summoning a servant, then tilting the head back to exhale a plume of fragrant smoke. For the cigar's duration, he's a licensed capitalist. Or, if the smoker's a woman, she's a masterful rebel, an undoubted intellectual, a *bas-bleu* descendant of George Sand.

Cigarettes have a bigger repertoire. The long holder, perhaps extinct now except in *art déco* revivals, went with monocles, silk dressing-gowns, and Cowardly wit. Turkish or Cypriot cigarettes, often of oval section, suggested delightful decadence: their users held them airily, as they might toy with tiny glasses of some exquisite liqueur. Was there a brand called *Orient Express*? If not, there should have been. But even humble Virginian cigarettes, in the distant past, had some aura of glamour: my parents and their friends seemed never to tire of novelty cigarette-boxes, disguised as books or packs of cards or miniature musical instruments. Slim ladies in toques, perched on pouffes, chattered in Boy-Friendly fashion to the flick of silver lighters amid mingling wisps of hazy blue.

Down market it was different. Few British smokers mastered the Gallic art of talking with a cigarette permanently wagging in the lips; but the cloth-cap-and-muffler addicts kept their hands in their pockets and a fag in the corner of their mouths. Removing it, their fingers formed a pair of pincers, as if to conceal it from prying authority; they'd pull it away, taking a sharp drag, sounding rather like the air brakes on a Roman bus. There'd be nonchalant shaking of spare ash, arm extended, into the gutter or the carpet. The whole operation had a touch of the hard-bitten about it—as did the private, patient exertion of rolling your own. Smoking, like sex, seemed to be the poor man's piano, or the solitary man's sex.

I PUT ALL THAT in the past tense because cigarettes may be on the slow way out. If they are, a tobacco company's historian might well record their folklore; and one of the people he ought to watch in action is the veteran Italian federalist Altiero Spinelli. Tall, well set-up, with solid, regular features and candid eyes, Spinelli was for several years a Member of the Commission of the European Communities—one of those dignified super-Eurocrats on the plush thirteenth floor of the Berlaymont building in Brussels. Guarded by aides and secretaries, whisked around in a limousine, he seemed every inch a senior statesman: but see how he smoked a cigarette. He'd hold the stub close to the end, and finish it to the very tip. Where had he learned the habit? In Mussolini's gaols. He'd spent ten years in prison, from the age of twenty onwards, followed by six years of "*confino*"—penitentiary enforced residence, "internal exile" as it were. Several of his Brussels colleagues and predecessors had known captivity, in prisoner-of-war or concentration camps; but, as a gaolbird, Spinelli held the record and, in this respect, bore the scar.

In effect, it was a medal ribbon. To be imprisoned by Mussolini was no great disgrace. But what puzzled and still puzzles some people, looking at Spinelli's political career, is his on-again-off-again flirtation with the Communist Party. To become a Communist in your teens, in the 1920s, and in Italy, was perhaps natural enough: it might betoken generosity, love of freedom, determination to resist. To break with the Party in the late 1930s, disgusted by the Moscow Trials, was reasonable and in the circumstances brave. How many of the Cambridge Apostles and their like showed similar discernment? Later, to join the *Partito d'Azione*, the "Action Party", to try to rescue post-War Italy from the extremes of Right and Left, seemed very sensible. *Mutatis mutandis*, many of the Action Party's supporters resembled present-day British members of the SDP. Equally, Spinelli was clear-sighted about the need to unite Europe; from the island of Ventotene, before his release, he smuggled out the manifesto which became the Bible of the European Federalist Movement. Yet, years later, in the 1970s, he used Communist backing to become a Left-wing independent member of the Italian and European Parliaments. After so much experience of totalitarianism, how could he accept such support?

SOME CLUES TO THE ANSWER, and some searching sidelights on history and psychology, are supplied by the first volume of Spinelli's autobiography, which appeared in Italian a few months ago.[1] Under the general title *Come ho tentato di diventare saggio*—"How I have tried to become wise"—it tells the story of his first thirty-six years, from his birth in Rome in 1907 to his release from Ventotene in 1943. The subtitle of this volume is *Io, Ulisse*—"I, Ulysses"—from

[1] *Come ho tentato di diventare saggio. Vol. I: Io, Ulisse*. By ALTIERO SPINELLI. Società editrice il Mulino, L. 25,000.

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his code-name as a member of the Communist underground.

In some respects, Spinelli is an Italian Candide; and parts of his memoirs are touchingly naive. He tells us of a childhood "accident" in his trousers, of a tailoress's playful threat to cut off his little penis, of his patchy discovery of the facts of life, of his timid yearning after girls he dared not talk to, of his glum visit to a brothel, of his passionate first affair (with a fellow-Communist), thwarted and extinguished by prison. It's as if such things had never happened before, or to anyone else: welcome to the human race, the reader feels. But it's honesty, not self-importance, that informs these humble confessions: Rousseau, not Pooter or Boswell, sets the tone. It prepares one for more damaging admissions. As a young Communist leader, Spinelli showed no pity to an embezzler of the cell's funds, and later treated a girl comrade's suicide as "a *petit-bourgeois* act" which "put her individual troubles above her duties as a Communist." "But what are you made of? Stone?" exclaimed a companion. It's to his credit, now, that Spinelli acknowledges such sins. "I became a Communist", he says, "as one becomes a priest."

What led him to that position? The polarisation of Italian politics may be one answer. The rise of the Fascist Party called forth extremism on the Left—rather as Christian Democracy, in the post-War years, was confirmed in its quasi-monopoly by the monolithic opposition of the Communists. In the 1920s, facing the Blackshirts, a hot-headed youngster might well feel that he had to be unequivocally Red.

Yet there was an alternative. Spinelli's father was a veteran Socialist, a reader of *Avanti!* At school, the young Altiero was absorbed by natural history and science: he paid little attention to political affairs. Because the family never went to church, he assumed for a while that he was Jewish. His father disabused him, and later went on to expound Socialist doctrine.

> "He spoke to me of the great division in society between the poor who worked and the rich who exploited and oppressed the poor. He said that the King, the government, the police, the Pope, and the priests ensured the maintenance of this state of affairs, i.e. capitalism—the first by their political power, the second with their religion, the opium of the people. . . . Against capitalism there had arisen in all countries a great movement—Socialism—which aimed at pooling everything and so securing equality for all. . . ."

"I listened", writes Spinelli; "and a new world opened up for me."

One may smile sadly now, as Spinelli perhaps does. Then, it was easier to swallow the doctrine—hook, Party line, and sinker. Italy was still a land disfigured by poverty and marred by ostentatious wealth. Many peasants remained landless share-croppers; there were pitiful beggars in the towns. The Church appeared reactionary: some of its adherents were superstitious, and its official view of women was unjust. Bully-boys were beginning to exploit social tension, as they always will. In the face of their violence, and the Establishment's immobility, it was natural to be tempted by simplistic diagnoses and ingenuous dreams.

So Spinelli could have followed, artlessly, in his father's footsteps. Instead, he joined the Communists. Was their teaching very different? Perhaps not: but what tipped the scale for Spinelli was their conduct. In November 1921, the Fascists tagged on to a funeral procession, trying to turn it, as he says, into "a punitive expedition" against the "Red" district of San Lorenzo on the eastern side of Rome. In Via Tiburtina, they were fired on, and had to withdraw.

> "Next morning all the newspapers deplored and condemned what had happened. All except *Il Comunista*. . . . The new party's Roman daily welcomed the lesson that the San Lorenzo proletariat had given to the Blackshirts, and recommended it to all the workers of Italy as an example to follow.
>
> From the bottom of my heart, inclined by nature to think that anything one held fast to should be defended, by force if need be, I felt scorn for all the other newspapers and sympathy for this one, in its modest grey format. . . .
>
> Comments on the San Lorenzo battle, and reading the mile-long articles in *Il Comunista* and *Avanguardia*, the young Communist weekly, showed me the first great difference between the Socialists and the Communists. The former invoked against the Fascists the protection of the State, although they considered it bourgeois. So they were always lamenting, deploring, and denouncing violence. With growing impatience, I wondered how they ever intended to bring about the revolution they claimed to seek. The Communists expected nothing from the police, the Royal Guards, and the State, which, being bourgeois, could only side with the Fascists. They wanted the workers themselves to organise their own defence against the Fascist onslaught."

So, at the age of fourteen, Altiero Spinelli chose "extra-parliamentary activity." Three years later, he joined the Party. Even now he seems not to have asked himself whether he wasn't playing into the Fascists' hands.

But at least, as his book's title puts it, he has tried to become wise. Looking back, he sees three basic motives underlying the complex reasons why he and many like him embraced the Communist creed.

> "Some felt moral revulsion against social injustice, and were drawn above all by the call to fight it, and by the promise of regeneration for mankind. Others were frightened by the disorder, uncertainty, and indecision that freedom sometimes involves. In their anxious quest for security, they were hypnotised by a party which demanded total obedience and devotion, and assigned to everyone his appointed daily task. It might expose them to persecution or death, but it gave them the calm certainty of being absorbed, firmly and completely, in the service of a higher cause. Finally—in Europe then, as in Asia and Africa today—there were those who became Communist because they passionately longed for political action, and were seduced by this quasi-priesthood, custodian of the secret laws which command the death and rebirth of society, determined to make it perfect by seizing absolute power."

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That was what Spinelli meant when he likened his Party membership to ordination in the Church.

THIS FIRST VOLUME of memoirs recalls Silvio Pellico's *Le mie prigioni*: Lucca, Viterbo, Civitavecchia, Ponza, Ventotene . . . the itinerary differs, but the experiences converge. In Spinelli's case, prison and *confino* were key phases in his lifelong self-education. Who was it said that Eton made a good preparation for gaol? Confinement, for Spinelli as for many prisoners-of-war, included enforced leisure and study time: he read, and wrote, and in the freer surroundings of *confino* he was able to debate and discuss. Shedding his illusions was painful, like cutting a corn down to its root. But one rooted conviction he never lost: disillusionment with nationalism.

As a boy at school, and later at Rome University, he had had his fill of patriotic slogans. World War I, far more than its successor, had been a national war; and for Italians, this was especially so.

> "For many of my contemporaries [Spinelli wrote], the Great War was the cradle of rabid nationalism. I, on the other hand, was one of those in whom it bred a stubborn dislike for the very words 'nation' and 'fatherland' and their claim to monopolise men's souls."

It was a further inducement to listen to Communist siren songs.

The sirens still sang, more fitfully, on Ventotene, that tiny penitentiary island twenty miles west of Ischia outside the Gulf of Gaeta. But by now Spinelli was deaf to their seduction. His waking hours were filled with other dreams. He had read Lionel Robbins on *The Economic Causes of War*—one of the many texts of the Federal Union movement in Great Britain, whose adherents included Sir William Beveridge and a young Oxford don named Harold Wilson. The history of Federal Union, which arose comet-like just before World War II, shone brightly for several years, then shifted and faded, has yet to be published: but its debates and its books and pamphlets anticipated most of the controversies since fought out in the United Nations and the European Community. Through Spinelli and his friends Eugenio Colorni and Ernesto Rossi, Federal Union's ideas reached the continental Resistance movement. They played their part, unnoticed by many, in the fervid post-War discussion of ways to prevent war. Spinelli himself, through his European Federalist Movement, contributed to the thinking of a whole generation—the founder generation of the still unfinished "Europe" being built today.

So, for his admirers, Altiero Spinelli has become a grand old man. Brash, confused, unrealistic—many adjectives have been thrown at him, and some of them stick. The draft Treaty for European Union which he has steered through the European Parliament may come to nothing; but it's not bad for a ginger group, and it may be a measuring-rod for the modest achievements of more "practical" politicians. Someone has to remind us how much remains to be done.

But does that someone need support from the Italian Communists? Electorally, perhaps he does. Under Berlinguer, and even now under Natta, the Party is no Stalinist rump. It's far more liberal than its French counterpart, still just about led by Georges Marchais. In Bologna and elsewhere, Communist administrators have given satisfaction and allayed fears. Maybe, one day, it'll be possible to "recover" Italy's Communist voters, as Mitterrand recovered so many of those in France. Yet, nevertheless, the Party is the Party is the Party: it only seems to smile when it has to; when it can, it bares its teeth. My feelings tell me that Spinelli's refusal to shun the comrades is in no way sinister, rather a mark of measured judgment, limited agreement, continued loyalty to some shared ideals. My head tells me that the real link is shared experience. You can change your opinions, but it's hard to change the way you smoke.

M

Appointment

RICHARD MAYNE, *writer, critic, and broadcaster, is to be Co-Editor of* ENCOUNTER *Magazine, its Trustees have announced.*

Anthony Thwaite, Co-Editor since 1973, will be spending 1985 on an attachment to Tokyo University.

Richard Mayne will be responsible for the literary and arts side of the magazine. As well as film, theatre, and literary criticism, both in print and on such BBC programmes as "Critics' Forum" and "Kaleidoscope", he has written a number of books. The most recent is **Postwar: The Dawn of Today's Europe**, *a widely-praised survey of the politics, economics, and social and cultural development of Western Europe during the first twelve years after World War II.*

Educated at St Paul's School, London, and Trinity College, Cambridge, from which he holds a Ph.D. degree, Richard Mayne was the Rome correspondent for the "New Statesman" before working with the European Community in Luxembourg, Brussels, Paris, and London. In Paris he was personal assistant to the "father of Europe", Jean Monnet. His translation of Monnet's **Memoirs** *was a winner of the Scott-Moncrieff Prize in 1979.*

Following General de Gaulle's 1963 veto on British membership of the European Community, Mayne left its service, returning only in 1973 when Britain was able to join. He headed the UK offices of the European Commission from 1973 to 1979. During the ten-year "interregnum", he divided his time between Europe and the United States, first as Paris correspondent of ENCOUNTER, *then as a visiting Professor at the University of Chicago, and later as Director of the Federal Trust for Education and Research.*

He has long been a regular contributor to ENCOUNTER, *in which for the past three years he has written the monthly "Column" over the initial "***M***."*

The Trustees of ENCOUNTER *are: Professor Maurice Cranston (London School of Economics); Professor Edward Shils (Peterhouse, Cambridge, and the University of Chicago); and Melvin J. Lasky, Co-Editor of* ENCOUNTER *since 1958.*

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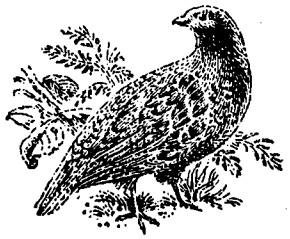
NOTES & TOPICS

Partridge's Slanguage

"Colloq.", "Obs.", "Vulg.", & Such—By LEO ROSTEN



I MET ERIC PARTRIDGE half-a-dozen times at the Savile Club in London, where he appeared every Wednesday before noon, took his customary seat at the edge of a couch, and spent an hour or so sipping sherry, chain-smoking, and chatting with old friends and new admirers (though he never, to my knowledge, had lunch at the Savile). He was spare to the point of frailty; his clothes hung loosely; but his eyes were always bright and mischievous. His conversation was delightful, relaxed and witty.

Born in New Zealand, raised in Australia, he fought in the First World War as an infantryman in the Australian army (where he sopped up army slang), and went to Oxford on a Queensland Fellowship in 1921. (His speech was far from plummy, to my ears.) He died in 1979, bright and chipper, at the surprising age of 85. The last Christmas card I received from him reported, in his crabbed handwriting, on his progress in a current project, and said that "kind friends" had prevailed upon him to leave London and were taking care of him.

Partridge was refreshingly free of modesty about his considerable achievement. He did not consider himself an expert, either in etymology or in linguistics, but he knew he had, virtually single-handed, defeated the purists who wish to exile the wonderful impudent coinages of the colloquial. Preceded by other memorable works—such as *A Dictionary of Clichés*, *Chamber of Horrors* (gruesome examples of British and American bureaucratese), and the eminently sensible *Usage and Abusage—A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, his massive recording of English slanguage down four centuries, right through the terminology born during the Falklands War, is his twenty-second book. The conflation of seven previous editions, supplements and revisions, this matchless compendium—first published in 1937—runs to 1,400 pages (plus 29 pages of forematter), at least 67,200 main entries, and at least 150,000 definitions.[1] It has been edited from Partridge's notes and new entries by Paul Beale, who corresponded with Partridge "copiously" for five years and to whom Partridge gave all the material he intended to include (corrections, deletions, new entries). Mr Beale has included some 1,000 initialled contributions of his own—all seen, and presumptively approved, by the master.

The opus is printed on 7½ in. + 9¾ in. pages, is most beautifully designed, with airy spacing and inviting typeface, and weighs five pounds. Depending on the reader's temperament and purpose, to lift this bulky lexicon is to make the heart sink—or sing. I find it endlessly fascinating: quirkish, illuminating, and instructive. To browse in it is like eating peanuts: addictive to the extreme.

SOURCES ARE METICULOUSLY supplied: all of the standard lexicons: *The Oxford English Dictionary*, the *Dictionary of Contemporary and Colloquial Usage*, Francis Grose's *Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (1785–1823), Heywood's *Proverbs* (1546), plus publications such as *Lore and Language*, W. Matthews' *London Slang at the Beginning of the XVIII Century*, the seven volumes of Farmer & Henley's matchless *Slang and Its Analogues* (1890–1904), the Reverend George Goodenough's *The Handy Man Afloat and Ashore*, and even Xaviera Hollander's *The Best Parts of a Man*(!). Surprisingly, there is no mention of Ebenezer Cobham Brewer's marvellous *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, first published in 1870.

Anything Partridge heard, read, saw or received from correspondents around the world was grist to his mill. He seems to have imposed no restricting criteria on his omnivorous receptivity. In consequence, there is a catch-as-catch-can quality to this compilation, and many a reader may feel that a disproportionate number of words are obscure, unimportant, or overly specialised. The sources range from the schoolboy jargon of some small school in Yorkshire to lingo from a South African colliery to the technical terms of surfers, skateboarders, and television jinglers. A sampling of the pages tells us of derivations from the Maori, soldiers, sailors, airmen, gambling casinos, thieves' talk, Oxford glosses, medical terms, rhyming fads, back-formations, railwaymen's argot, hooligans, trawlermen, police, criminals, con-men, pawnshops, Cockneys, Parsees, nicknames, pseudonyms, seamen, barracks profanity, etc., etc. Critics may complain of an excessive

[1] *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English: Colloquialisms and Catch-Phrases, Fossilised Jokes and Puns, General Nicknames, Vulgarisms and such Americanisms as have been naturalised.* By ERIC PARTRIDGE. Edited by PAUL BEALE. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £45.00.

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number of locutions from the Boer War, from Partridge's beloved tennis and glorified cricket, and from New Zealand and Australia. (A "barcoo buster" is, after all, a severely local term for a gale "in mid or south Queensland." And a "bare-belly" merely denotes a sheep without wool on its belly or inner hind legs.)

PARTRIDGE'S PAGES are crowded with rare, obsolete, or emphatically dead words, which are a joy to savour:

bumsuck: To toady.

colfabi: A water-closet at Trinity College, Dublin . . . Latinized Irish.

mitney: A policeman, c.1923, prob. ex Romany or Shelta.[2]

mish-topper: A coat; a petticoat; ca. 1670–1850. . . .

But "pull up a Jack", meaning to stop a post-chaise on the highway with a view to robbery (ca. 1810–50), should surely have been labelled "obsolete."

Some entries are baffling, because they are straightforward English, not tainted for patricians by the odium of slang, cant, jargon, catch-wordedness, or colloquial sub-status: e.g. "*preference*. A choice . . . by 1935, virtually S.E." I wonder when *preference* was not Standard English.

Partridge also dowers us with some immensely expressive neologisms:

barf: To vomit: to be sea- (or air) sick. Can., probably ex US, since (?) ca. 1940.

barking-dog navigator . . . a term of abuse (or respect) for those unschooled coasting (coastal) skippers who navigate by the different sounds of the local dogs barking.

Some of the etymology is breath-taking:

randy, adj. violent; esp. sexually warm, lecherous, from ca. 1780. . . . Perhaps orig. ex *rand*, to rave, and poss . . . influenced by Hindustani *randi-baz*, a lecher.

He had not the slightest hesitation in making guesses—in dating an entry or its provenance: thus, snazzy: "perhaps a blend of snappy and jazzy."

PARTRIDGE IS A STICKLER for accuracy ("*sha'n't*: less correctly *shan't*"), but it sometimes eludes him—after eight definitions of *bummer* he offers one that was "noted in a graffiti, May, 1967." He also credits the once famous New York best-selling novel *I Can Get It For You Wholesale* to "J. Weidner" (for Jerome Weidman). And I spotted a few omissions. Although there are three definitions for *cub*, dating from around 1600, the most common usage—in American vernacular, at least—is not given: a young newspaper reporter.

Keep an ear to the ground is offered by Paul Beale as a colloquialism "since (?) ca. 1950"—a startling statement since the phrase was used in the American West by Indian scouts or travellers who did indeed put their ear to the ground to hear vibrations of approaching (or receding) horsemen. And *Goniv* is defined in the cant of the South African diamond fields, or (as *Gonov*) as a skilful pickpocket. But in East End and underworld parlance a *gonif* has much wider meaning: a thief, a crook, a clever scoundrel. There are, however, surprisingly few errors in a work of such size and range.

It is, of course, much safer for the lexicographer to include than exclude. I can only raise the question of relevance or utility to entries such as:

say an ape's paternoster: To chatter with cold: 1611 (Cotgrave).

shocks. Choques, a small Fr. town near Bethune; army: WWI.

And here is the entire entry for an extremely odd word:

griffmetoll, griff-metoll. A sixpence: c [colloquial] ca. 1740–1800. Why?

"Why?" indeed. Where was this word encountered? (It must have been *somewhere*: in print, overheard, submitted by a correspondent.) Absent that datum, how does Partridge know what it meant?

[2] Shelta—"a kind of cryptic Irish spoken by tinkers and confirmed tramps; a secret jargon composed chiefly of Gaelic words disguised by . . . transposition of letters, back-slanging . . . (Farmer and Henley)."

Questions & Answers

THE MAIN *evidence on the effect of Video nasties on children [Martyn Harris writes] took the form of a report published last November by the Parliamentary Video Group inquiry, entitled* **Video Violence and Children**. *This was based on 6,000 questionnaires completed by children in schools throughout Britain. They were asked their opinion on 100 or so films, 30 of which were "nasties" from a list held by the Director of Public Prosecutions. It was stated that over 40% had seen one of the nasties, and 38% of five- or six-year-olds. The newspapers loved it. "Six Year Old Addicts of Video Nasties" ("Sun"). "Ban the Sadist Videos" ("Daily Mail").*

*More recently, psychologist Guy Cumberbatch (Director of Communications Research at Aston University) has subjected the questionnaire to some tests. He found it impossible to apply to children under eleven, describing it as "inadequate and very confusing." Instead he gave the questionnaire to five classes of eleven-year-olds, with the difference that the real Video nasties had been altered to fictitious ones—***I Vomit on Your Cannibal Apocalypse,** *and so forth. About 68% of the children claimed to have seen videos that do not exist. Over 50% claimed to have seen four or more. "Any competent psychologist", says Cumberbatch, "would know that in self-completion questionnaires, young children just tick anything they like the sound of."*

All the teachers who saw the questionnaire thought it was hopeless for young children. One headmaster took it upon himself to demonstrate the inadequacy of the technique by conducting his own survey of pupils. **"Have you seen a Martian recently?"** *he asked them. It was established that 20% of British eleven-year-olds have met a Martian in the last fortnight.*

NEW SOCIETY

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Or take "*slumber-suit*: pyjamas; derisive." The neologism is anything but derisive; it is (*a*) an advertising name for pyjamas that may be worn out of bed, as a "lounge suit"; or (*b*) a cutesy phrase to use with kiddies.

PARTRIDGE HAD NO elaborate theories about language; he simply was fascinated by the way our language grows. He despised the scholars who sneered at unconventional additions to the English tongue. But he *hated* many of the words and phrases he admitted to his lexicon: mouldy clichés, pretentious cant, genteel neologisms, profanity employed for no purpose save to pander to the profane.

In his Preface to the First Edition, noting that the great *Oxford English Dictionary* "has omitted certain vulgarisms", Partridge raised the blunt question:

> "Should a lexicographer, if he includes *any* vulgarisms (in any sense of the term) omit the others? I have given them all. (My rule, in the matter of unpleasant terms, has been to deal with them as briefly, as astringently, as aseptically as was consistent with clarity and adequacy; in a few instances, I had to force myself to overcome an instinctive repugnance; for these I ask the indulgence of my readers.)"

He ignores the prurience of some readers and the genteelism of others. The classic four-letter words are here, of course (*piss* revels in no less than 73 uses), and a gallimaufry of explicit terms for sexual congress, sexual abnormalities (we cannot speak of "perversions" in this liberated time), and eloquent metaphors for masturbation, copulation (Partridge prefers to call it *coition*, often verbified as *coït*), cunnilingus, sodomy, incest, homosexuality, *et alia*. I cannot begin to estimate the number of synonyms, in this candid parade of clinical and vulgar appellations, for the best-known rhyme-word for *luck*.

In all of this Partridge is totally detached, unruffled, precise and praiseworthy. He refuses to be demulcent. He never snickers, giggles, pokes you in the ribs, or hides behind a euphemism. The four-letter obscenity for "defecate" receives 114 discrete definitions, most of them involving compound nouns or adjectives. Few vulgarisms live so rich and vivid an existence.

For the sexual meaning of *come*, the *dégagé* Partridge quotes Farmer & Henley's *Slang and its Analogues*: "To experience the sexual spasm"; then remarks, "Considered coarse, but it was orig. a euph, and in C.20, how, if the fact is to be expressed non-euphemistically, could one express it otherwise with such terse simplicity." He goes on to record nine other meanings, taken from J. H. Vaux's *Glossary of Cant* (1812), Greenwood's *Tag, Rag, and Co.* (1883), the *O.E.D.*, "the novels of John Beames", and G. F. Newman's *Sir, you Bastard*.

STUFFY LEXICOGRAPHERS deplore Partridge's intrusion of personal feelings, which I find delightful: "*Zap* became hideously familiar in late 1960s. . . ." In the Appendix entry for *gremlins*, he jeers at a *New World Dictionary* attribution:

> "I suspect that here we have an example of philological wishful thinking. . . . The erudite etymologies from Danish-Old Norse and from Erse were, I surmise, 'thought up' by scholars who had *not* served in the Air Force. (During my RAF days, Dec. 1942–July 1945, I did at least serve five or six months on a Bomber Command Station.) My theory is based on mere knowledge of RAF slang and its coiners and its on-the-spot practitioners. Nor is it anything more than a guess. I can play the etymological game with the best of them: here is a term springing from observation of facts and human nature. Erudition is a wonderful thing—but it's not a linguistic panacea. Here, I believe, erudition is powerless—more, it's irrelevant."

Whenever one is tempted to carp about an omission here or an overstretched explication there, it is worth recalling the magisterial admonition of Samuel Johnson in the introduction to his great lexicon:

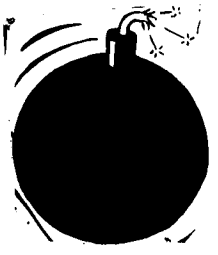
> ". . . a few wild blunders and risible absurdities, from which no work of such multiplicity was ever free, may for a time furnish folly with laughter. No dictionary of a living tongue can ever be perfect. . . . What is obvious is not always known, and what is known is not always present. In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed."

If one must limit an appraisal of Partridge's torrential work to but one adjective, the choice is a breeze: stupendous.

Paris Notebook

By Jean-François Revel

Terrorism, & No End



FOR OVER A DECADE terrorism has ranked among the most powerful agents of tension and insecurity in the Western world. Its hounding intensity and sporadic appearance, its ubiquity and unexpectedness, all make up its power and hamstring the nations that it strikes. What is the linkage between a murder in Bilbao, a guerrilla ambush in Peru, a train-bomb in France, gunfire spraying passers-by from a London embassy, a plane hijacked in Frankfurt or Kuwait, the mining of the Red Sea? Governments and publics unable to get to grips with so elusive an aggressor often prefer to drift into a blinkered habituation rather than pursue the clear implications. We have spent too much time postponing the moment of looking the terrorist in his face and seeing the true features.

Modern terrorism has three main characteristics: its principal targets are democracies; it is an international system; and it is a "nationalised" or state terrorism. These three

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definitions raise a question and call for a conclusion, preferably a practical one. *Question:* why has it taken so long for the nations plagued by the new terrorism to understand its nature? *Conclusion*: an international menace requires an equally international deterrent.

According to the classic ideology, terrorism and guerrilla warfare are supposed to constitute the final and *ipso facto* the legitimate resort of "freedom fighters" against dictatorships: of Resistance against Occupation. It is only the oppressed, stripped of any peaceable means to defend their rights, who are forced to take to terrorism. But how does this ideology explain the terrorism of today? For if the world does indeed present the lamentable spectacle of a majority of nations enslaved, it is not most usually among these nations that terrorist violence is rife.

THE NEW TERRORISM, as developed since about 1970, has been inflicted predominantly upon the democracies, in other words upon precisely those few countries in which the political system ought in theory to have made the recourse to violence unnecessary. This illogicality is familiar to us in the old and well-known cases of Italy, the West German Republic, and post-Franco Spain. Moreover, since 1980 terror has suddenly exploded in France, and more recently in Portugal. A look at the map of the attacks committed since 1970 shows that the black spots are clustered most densely in Western Europe.

Is there not an intriguing anomaly about this terror offensive against a group of countries which compared with the rest of the planet enjoy a considerably higher degree of social justice and political liberty? And the plague is even more suspect in regions where democracy is fragile, and therefore more breakable by violence. In Latin America an odd concomitance keeps recurring with the regularity of a law of nature. Each time a nation is (or becomes, or is restored to being) democratic, then terrorism breaks out. We saw it happen in Venezuela with the restoration of universal suffrage after 1960. We are seeing it in Colombia, where those Europeans who sympathise with the guerrillas forget that terrorism is at work in a country which has had regular elections, alternating governments, a free press, political parties, and strong trade unions for thirty years. Perhaps they are not perfect, but then where are they? In any case, these democratic instruments refute the explanation of terrorism as a reaction against dictatorship.

In this respect, the Peruvian example is virtually a classic model. We know that an underground organisation called the "Shining Path" sprang up in Peru around 1965. This subversive group refrained from any violent action during the eleven years of a military dictatorship thanks to which, from 1968 onwards, various supposedly progressive generals brought about a 60% collapse in the GNP and drove the people from poverty into hardship. In face of this failure, the process of restoring democracy began late in 1979; and the first free presidential election since 1963 was scheduled for 19 May 1980. The first armed action by the "Shining Path"—and the timing is almost too good to be true—happened on 18 May 1980. The following day, the Peruvians elected the centrist Fernando Belaunde. Today, after four years of a continual nightmare of bloody crimes, the inevitable has come about: Belaunde, helpless to combat the terror by ordinary means, has entrusted this task to the Army. If worse comes to worse, it is not impossible that *les grands consciences* who are now so silent may soon have a new military dictatorship in Latin America to denounce.

I include in this instructive though partial list the crucial case of the Lebanon, the one and only democracy in the Arab world, which has ended by collapsing under the pressure of having become the headquarters, arms depot, training centre, and control tower of international terrorism.

For contemporary terrorism is assuredly international, including those cases in which it first arose out of a local conflict. The Basques of ETA have their supply lines in Libya, the Near East, Iran, Cuba and Nicaragua. In return, the so-called "Danish journalist" who recently attempted, on behalf of Managua, to assassinate the anti-Sandinista leader Eden Pastora in Honduras, and who succeeded in killing several of the foreign correspondents attending Pastora's press conference, was . . . a Basque. The leader of the hit squad which failed to murder Shapour Bakhtiar in Paris in 1980, on behalf of Khomeini (he managed only to kill a woman neighbour), was a Palestinian carrying a Lebanese passport. The ASALA (Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia) leader picked up after the slaughter at Orly had a very un-Armenian name and a thoroughly Syrian passport. Interpol has reason to believe that one of the killers who valiantly machine-gunned staff and customers in the Goldenberg restaurant in the rue des Rosiers in Paris in 1982 is the same man who later shot down the Palestinian moderate Issam Sartaoui in the midst of the Socialist International Congress (Lisbon, April 1983). The Portuguese terrorist group *PF 25* (Popular Force of 25 April) receives aid from ETA. The NORAID network centred in the United States supplies Irish terrorists with arms and money. In France, recent police raids have proved that "Direct Action" also has backing from abroad. These arrangements for reciprocal assistance are an old story.

It was Japanese members of the Red Army group who carried out the massacre at Lod Airport in Tel Aviv in 1972. It was the Venezuelan "Carlos", working for the OAAS group (Organisation for Armed Arab Struggle), who put his signature to the attacks on 31 December 1983 at the Gare Saint-Charles in Marseilles and on the high-speed train. Often we find that unknown names or sets of initials are used in order to lay false trails. I know it is fashionable to make jokes about those who are obsessed with the notion of a single "underground conductor" orchestrating world terrorism. Although there are certainly a number of these, for us it comes down to the same thing. The manifold and sometimes divided networks have nevertheless achieved a degree of coordination which constitutes the equivalent of a coherent multinational organisation.

SUCH COHERENCE AND LONGEVITY, so great a capacity constantly to regroup and restore both membership and resources, would be unimaginable without the support of states. Western governments are getting to know the terrorist states—Libya, Iran, Iraq, Syria. And on the other hand some Communist

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states operate as relay links with the USSR. Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the *DDR*, Cuba, and South Yemen are in this category, and these contributions come in addition to the aid which the Soviet secret services supply directly to the various terror networks. Although these responsibilities are hard to establish, the connections being naturally well concealed, after so many years the difficulty no longer consists in gathering proof, but rather in having the proof taken seriously.

Why? On the part of the democratic governments, the timorous refusal to identify the true instigators stems from the most practical kind of dilemma. Let us suppose that it became no longer possible to ignore the conclusion that the Bulgarian secret services, and hence the *KGB*, really were behind the attempted assassination of the Pope. What comes next? The enormity of the measures to be taken might well deter the people involved from opening their eyes. That is the choice which was made repeatedly, for less spectacular actions, in 1970, 1972 and 1975, each time the Eastern bloc's secret services were caught in the act of "encouraging" terrorism in the West. The least that can be said is that this feigned ignorance has not inclined the terrorist states towards moderation.

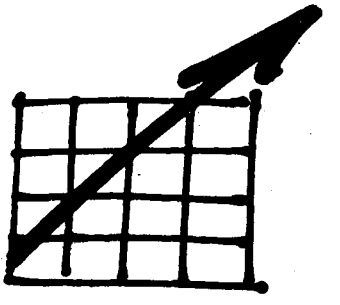
The indulgent attitude of the media and public opinion has more complex causes—a bias in favour of terrorists which equates them with true Resistance movements; the sympathy of Marxist intellectuals for anti-capitalist violence; and the disregard of history. The Uruguayan "Tupamaros" are considered to have waged a struggle against a dictatorship, whereas it was they who brought it to power as a result of sabotaging their own democracy! For some people, Turkish history begins with the military taking power in September 1980. They forget the thousands of incidents (up to twenty killings a day) which eroded democratic government in Turkey for a decade. At whose instigation? Why did Bonn constantly refuse to extradite Turkish terrorists from its soil, even in the days when the social-democrat Bulent Ecevit was Prime Minister, and just as duly elected as Helmut Schmidt? Do people know that in four years the "Shining Path" massacred three thousand peasants in Peru who refused to "serve the Revolution"? Or that the guerrillas in El Salvador, very much in the minority (as the elections have proved), behave in just the same way and need fear no comparison with the "Death Squads" in this respect?

We err when we grant one jot of respect to the violent minorities within democracies which kill because they cannot convince, because they are unable to assemble enough supporters to win victory in the ballot-box. And what kind of heroes are these cowardly "urban guerrillas" who run no risks in the slaughter of innocent people, using weapons provided by foreign dictatorships? The English police were pilloried by the media in August 1984 for killing a young demonstrator in Northern Ireland. Fair enough. But how many murders had been provoked by the foreign agent of NORAID whom the police were trying to catch?

INTERNATIONAL STATE TERRORISM calls for an equally international response on the part of the states which it threatens. This much has been understood: on 9 June 1984, seven Western democracies meeting for an economic summit in London adopted a resolution providing for co-ordination of the fight against terrorism. It remains to be seen what practical application this programme will receive. If it amounts to nothing more than "tracking down the killers", then it runs the risk of having to be endlessly repeated. The democracies must advise the aggressor nations that they are dupes no longer, and that they hold those nations responsible. The art of the totalitarian powers has consisted in inventing forms of warfare by another name—and terrorism is one of these. In order to become effective, the struggle against terrorism must no longer be viewed as a simple matter of "policing" and "law enforcement", but as a question of national defence.

J.-F.R.

Todd's Originality



THAT FINE art historian Edgar Wind had the habit of remarking that discoveries generally depend on an extremely simple and yet utterly unexpected idea. Few books have illustrated this aphorism as vividly as those of Emmanuel Todd, especially since his *L'invention de la France* (1981) and *La troisième planète* (1983).

The first of these two fine works took as its starting point the recognition of a long-standing problem or paradox: namely, that in France it has proved impossible to find any satisfactory overlap between the distribution-map of electoral behaviour and that of socio-economic factors. It is not necessarily the poorest or the most industrialised regions that vote (or used to vote) Communist; and in 1981, for example, it was not always in the regions most affected by recession and unemployment that there was the greatest increase in the vote for the Left. Scratching beneath the surface of conscious motivations, Emmanuel Todd discovered a relationship between ancient family structures (there are several types in France, varying with the region) and the stability of certain voting patterns.

In *La troisième planète* he extended his method and looked for correlations between family structures and ideological systems in the world. In particular he was trying to answer one of the most haunting questions of our time: what are the sources of totalitarian ideology? We have failed to unearth any purely political, economic, or social explanation of totalitarianism. No case has been rationally argued which can fully account for the fact that in some countries (but not in others) human beings enclose themselves in a system which feeds them badly, destroys their freedom, and may even deliver them up to wholesale slaughter.

The interpretations of classical political science are frankly at

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a loss in this domain; they merely express astonishment—"It's incredible, but that's how things are. . . ." Some other dimension had to be invoked. Emmanuel Todd's hypothesis is based on looking past the surface of political reasoning to unearth familial substrata which have long since been analysed and catalogued, but which no one had thought of relating to an ideological system. The family system which carries the greatest predisposition towards totalitarianism, according to Todd, is the type known as "exogamous communal", an egalitarian/authoritarian family in which the relations between generations are authoritarian, and those between brothers egalitarian. This model is found in nearly every country where totalitarianism has triumphed. In those where civil society bitterly rejects an imposed Communism—in Poland, for example—it does not exist.

IT WAS BOTH TEMPTING and logical to apply the same schema to the riddle of "development." The fact is that none of the explanations of underdevelopment hitherto suggested has been satisfactory, and in particular none of the purely economic explanations. Furthermore, it is impossible to remedy underdevelopment without understanding what brings about "development" in the first place. Attention usually focuses on only one of its aspects, "economic take-off"—which is really the manifestation rather than the cause of development, all the more so because development is a lengthy process which sometimes goes on for centuries. The elements underlying the economic take-off of Europe in the late 18th century began to come together at the end of the Middle Ages, perhaps even earlier. Industrial development is only one segment of a greater whole, and chronologically it is not the first in the sequence.

The first, in fact, is literacy. Emmanuel Todd assembles a whole series of examples showing how, both in the past and in the present, every society that "takes off" may be seen to have crossed some decades earlier the decisive literacy threshold of 50% of the population or—still more decisive—70% of young people aged 15-to-25. Thus Sweden and Switzerland, still almost totally rural in the 19th century, had the highest rates of literacy in Europe—hence the speed of their subsequent industrial take-off. Around 1850, Germany was the butt of sarcastic comments from Karl Marx, who considered it backward, provincial, and removed from industrial progress; in 1880 Germany was to overtake England and lead the world in the chemical industry. The reason is clear: at the very moment when Marx was jeering at it, Germany had just reached the critical literacy rate. The recent swift expansion of Japan and South Korea only becomes comprehensible when related to a similar cultural background. For cultural development precedes industrial development; or, to put it differently, development is first and foremost, *cultural*.

WHY do certain societies begin to become literate? In their book *Lire et écrire* (1977), an account of the rise of literacy in France, Furet and Ozouf had diagnosed a quite spontaneous "anthropological mutation" ("an invention of the village rather than of the State") in the growth of literacy. For Emmanuel Todd this mutation is rooted in a well-defined family structure, whose detection led him to apply his general hypothesis to the theory of development.

This family structure is characterised by marriage at a relatively late age (often over the age of 20, or even 25); by a slight age difference between husband and wife, tending to favour both maternal authority and a system of bilateral succession, in other words not determined by gender. The family is authoritarian in the relationship between parents and children, with the mother dominant, but inegalitarian in the successional treatment of brothers. According to Todd, this family type (which "ensures a maximum of maternal power in the upbringing of the children" and "the prolongation of the process of human apprenticeship necessary for cultural development") constitutes the most propitious anthropological factor predisposing to development. Of course it is not the only such factor. Other types of family structure also contain such predispositions, stronger or weaker according to whether they are reinforced by external pressures. But it is the society in which authoritarian, feminist, and inegalitarian family structures predominate that has produced modern development—not artificially, but by natural birth. The fundamental shift of perspective offered by *L'enfance du monde*[1] is, above all, that cultural determinism precedes economic determinism.

TODD IS NOT without his rigidities, nor has he escaped that well-known affliction which might be labelled "auto-persuasive dogmatism"—the occupational disease of sociologists. On the pretext that England (unlike Scotland) does not have quite the proper family system, he practically refuses to authenticate the English industrial revolution. "His" family system is authoritarian, and he seems to believe (arguing from the cases of Germany and Japan) that democracy and development must therefore be incompatible. But it is precisely in their democratic periods that these two countries developed most, and everywhere else the triad of Capitalism, Democracy, and Development remains, in spite of everything, one of the most common and best-documented of historical mechanisms. (And how much there is to be said about the influence of property rights!) One might also suggest to the author that cultural development and literacy are not exactly synonymous. A society can display great scientific, technical, and organisational creativity at the level of its élites (as England did in the 17th and 18th centuries) without reaching very high rates of literacy among the masses.

Emmanuel Todd was the first to acknowledge that his explanatory model applies more loosely in the study of development than in that of political ideology. Whatever objections and disputes the book may raise, they will not be unprofitable. A new kind of debate has opened about the issue of development, in a field which has long lain bare of genuinely original ideas.

J.-F.R.

[1] *L'enfance du monde*. By EMMANUEL TODD. Editions du Seuil (Paris).

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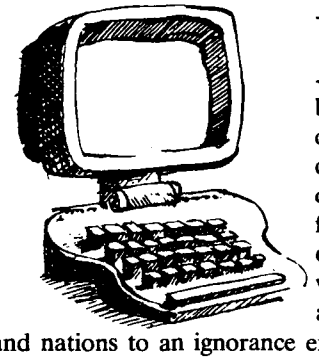
Can Governments Learn?



HAS THE WORLD been any better governed since it has been better informed? Surely that is one of the most disturbing questions of our time, and one of the most decisive for our future. A few centuries, or even a few decades ago, it was possible to impute the aberrations of governments and nations to an ignorance excused by the impossibility of marshalling a host of economic, demographic and even geographical data whose science was in its infancy. Today, however, with the mass of information continually available, government and public do not make uncalculated mistakes and do not run into trouble unless they want to—or so we have been instructed to think.

Statesmen, we are told, are armed with confidential information and exact statistics which the ordinary citizen does not have. Good for them. But one wonders whether they really do start their day by taking the time to read and digest the wealth of quite public and published information which it brings. It does not seem likely, seeing how often their diagnoses are in obvious contradiction to facts which are fairly common knowledge.

I was mulling over this paradox as I tackled "RAMSÉS" (the *Rapport annuel mondial sur le système économique et les stratégies*) for 1983–84, compiled by IFRI (*Institut français des relations internationales*) and published by Editions Economica. It is a picture of the world situation—an analysed, interpreted photograph, of course—and significantly it has its companions or rivals: it appeared at the same time as the publication in London and New York of the report of the Worldwatch Institute, called quite simply *The State of the World* (1984). This second synthesis stems from a different, more ecological inspiration, with an ancestry related to the Club of Rome. Both reports have the advantage of providing the reader with an international documentation clearly subdivided according to the problems and regions of the globe. Not everyone will draw the same practical conclusions from their material, but no decision-maker has the right to overlook it, whether deliberately or not. Unfortunately that is what happens all too often, invalidating the clanking array of "social projects" based on erroneous data.

TAKE, FOR EXAMPLE, the lowering of the age of retirement. This traditional and respectable demand has just been satisfied by the political decision-makers at the very moment when an elementary knowledge of the demographic facts in the industrial nations shows that we are rushing towards what IFRI calls a "*Berezina des retraites*", a rush to retirement. For the conjunction of longer life-spans with a falling birth rate will make it more and more difficult to support, and still worse to solve, the growing burden of non-working pensioners mounted on the backs of a shrinking number of working taxpayers. That is why "RAMSÉS" informs us that if the year 1983 was signalised in France by the institution of retirement at 60, "in the coming years it is the postponement of the age of retirement which bids to become the focus of debate. . . ." And tomorrow's burning question may well be that of retirement at 70! An unexpected stroke of luck is that this bitter pill may actually contribute to *reducing* unemployment among the under-60s.

In any case it is demographic knowledge that determines the understanding of several of the crises of our time, and hence of their solution. "RAMSÉS", which is heavily influenced by the work of Alfred Sauvy, seems to me more up-to-date and more rich in explanations—on this as on many other points—than the Worldwatch report. The latter leaves untouched the old (1972) thesis of the Club of Rome, according to which population control will enable us to overcome both malnutrition in the Third World and unemployment in the affluent nations. Yet, of the continents of the Third World, Africa combines the lowest average standard of living and the lowest population density without being the most poorly provided with potential capacities for production.

As for the developed nations, whose birth rate has begun to stagnate or even to fall in relation to the death rate, they derive no advantage from this standstill in fertility. The fall in manpower slows down economic activity, which in turn makes jobs even scarcer. The fearsome economic, social, and cultural effects of the demographic differences among nations are beginning to be the object of some very alarming studies. If more citizens and politicians had taken the trouble to consult them, they might have better understood, and perhaps anticipated, the electoral rise in France of M. Le Pen's *Front national*. For in the natural way of things every rich and underpopulated country attracts a surge of immigration into this zone of low demographic pressure. Furthermore, the sparser the host population the less can the immigrant population melt into it and adopt its culture and customs. When, in a school, the number of pupils of foreign origin rises above a certain threshold, the transmission of French culture, even to pupils of French origin, becomes difficult. So the immigrant population retreats into enclaves, and this gives rise to hostile reactions. These must be condemned, providing that we do not therefore fail to investigate their demographic and sociological foundations. If not, then we tie our own hands. To proceed to talk about a "*résurgence du fascisme*" is a hasty response which explains nothing and mends nothing.

ONE AFTER ANOTHER, with instructive rapidity, the great unknowns that plague mankind are being replaced. Today it is population decline that probably constitutes the most serious disease for the developed societies. Ten or even five years ago, everyone saw the energy crisis as the most immediate danger—now the world's energy consumption has fallen, against all fears and all predictions. "From now on", one French expert writes, "the economy can progress without its energy needs increasing."

Crude-oil exports from the Middle East have halved in three years, and in 1983 the OPEC countries as a whole showed a

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balance-of-payments deficit on their current accounts of more than 30 billion dollars. Obviously we are a long way removed from the once fashionable question of how on earth to recycle the petro-dollar surpluses! Better still, some of the nuclear power stations built or planned to take the place of oil are in jeopardy of becoming superfluous in their own turn.

Now, this complete situation reversal was already a well-established fact in 1982 when several industrial countries, including France, signed firm contracts with Algeria and particularly with the USSR to import quantities of gas well in excess of their needs and at ruinous prices. For all these gas contracts contain "take or pay" clauses, meaning that the buyer has to pay for the agreed quantities at the agreed rate, even when he does not take delivery. Since it is not conceivable that the governments responsible for this blunder did not have access to information that all the world possessed, one is forced to conclude that they took no notice of what they knew. Why? That is one of the riddles of our time, both in this and in many other instances.

Does this blindness have to do with the rulers having no time to pay heed to the *tendances lourdes*, long-term developments and deep transformations? In the relationship between technical progress and employment—in the revolutionary hypothesis that we may be on the way towards "the end of work",[1] or at any rate towards societies in which human work will become marginal—we are seeing the example of a change which politicians cannot easily integrate into their everyday activities. It is certainly not the only example.

So the IFRI report is bound to underline the question now on everybody's lips, namely whether it is still possible to control an economy. Admitting that "the guidance of the economy is becoming more and more approximate" and that public authorities almost everywhere are less and less capable of undertaking this guidance, the "RAMSÉS" authors observe in their turn "the irruption of civil society into a domain hitherto subject to a small number of actors." Quite rightly, they re-call that the rebellion of the Californian tax-payers in 1979 and the vote for "Proposition 13" expressed, according to the opinion polls, not so much a dissatisfaction about taxes (9% of the sample) as dissatisfaction with public authorities (36%).

This feeling is even keener in the Third World than in the developed countries. Take two of the evils which are among the principal causes of famine and drought: soil erosion and the destruction of forests (whose ravages are detailed in the Worldwatch report). It would be much more useful, but involve more trouble, less thanks, and less publicity, if the rulers of the ravaged countries were to take patient measures of precaution against these scourges rather than adding their share of babble to the international forums of the "North-South dialogue."

The governments which have chosen the most *dirigiste* development strategies—Tanzania, Algeria, Mexico—have ended by condemning their economies to rank among those which are most dependent on outside help. The more liberal economies of South-east Asia manage their national debts (and without IMF supervision) infinitely better than the Latin American countries so notoriously jealous of their independence. Beyond question, though, the most striking contrast is between the ruination of China, that paradigm of the centrally planned economy, and the condition of India, which has remained a market economy. India has achieved self-sufficiency in food, and has also seen a regular annual growth rate of 3 to 4%, despite the world crisis. Thus the best results have been obtained when states, while not being idle, have resisted playing the Almighty Planner.

IN SHORT, for several decades a gap, indeed a split, has arisen between the complexity of the world and the simplicity of political authority—I was going to say the persistent archaism of that authority. Its level of debate and the kinds of decision it can take, or pretend to take, remain dominated by the present moment, the short-term outcome, and the current state of opinion. So if the statesmen snap their fingers at the wealth of information that modern sciences make available, it is not (or not always) because they are intellectually unfit to make use of it. Rather it is because they are aware that they have in their hands an instrument—the traditional state power inherited from the past—which is not designed to make use of it, which does not allow them to convert it into deeds.

Jean-François Revel

[1] Michel Drancourt, *La fin du travail* (Pluriel).

Just Joking

London

HEARD *any good jokes lately? The one, for instance, about the vegetarian cannibal?* **"He only ate Swedes . . .!"**

No, stop it. Don't laugh. That joke is not funny. Really. That joke is "racist." Very bad.

What about this one: "What did Cinderella say when she took her snapshots to be developed?" **"Some day my prints will come!"**

No, no, no. Please. Settle down now. That wasn't funny either. No, not a bit. That joke was in truly bad taste. It was "sexist." Yes, really. Horrible.

So thank your lucky stars that the good folk at the Inner London Education Authority are looking out for us. They spotted these fearful examples in the children's joke book "Watch Out The Humphreys Are Back" issued by Unigate—and moved accordingly.

The "Equal Opportunities Unit" got Contact, the ILEA newspaper, which goes out to 30,000 teachers in 1,100 schools, to carry a warning about the booklet's "racist" and "sexist" content.

"It may be brought into schools by pupils", went the solemn editorial. "Primary heads in particular might wish to know of its existence in the light of the authority's equal opportunities initiatives, and its anti-racist policy in particular."

Unigate were somewhat puzzled their joke had turned sour. Eric Merry, a spokesman for the Milk Division, said: "We certainly had no wish to offend anyone and are sorry if it has. It was meant as a harmless book for children. We have a great affinity with ethnic groups because they represent many of our employees and customers."

Unigate had received few complaints from their three million customers, he said. There were three letters, from "London Against Racism", "The Celtic Society" and "Irish Presence in Great Britain."

DAILY MAIL

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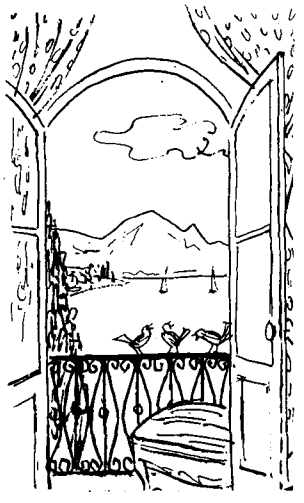
Cracked by a Sound

Graham Greene in Panama—By DAVID PRYCE-JONES



FOR A NUMBER of years now, Graham Greene has been living in the south of France, at Antibes. One day there in 1976, at a moment when he was writing *The Human Factor*, the novel with an apologetic view of a Philby-type defector to the Soviet Union, a telegram arrived. Out of the blue, here was an invitation to visit Panama, sent on behalf of its dictator, General Omar Torrijos. "Fear can be easily experienced, but fun is hard to come by in old age." With that rather appealing remark, Greene was off.

One jaunt led to another; four in all by 1981, and a fifth two years after that. These experiences have resulted in a memoir, *Getting to Know the General*,[1] much more self-revealing than his two previous volumes of autobiography, which are remote and formal to the point of claustrophobia. It has obviously been a pleasure and relief to emerge from the literary closet for the sake of political commitment: to place, without qualification, his talent and reputation at the service of a campaign against the United States and its purposes in the contested arena of Central America. Animus against the United States is the sole key to his observations and judgments. Using the privileges and freedoms of residing in Antibes, Greene is praising and promoting those who would destroy such privileges and freedoms elsewhere. In that sense, *Getting to Know the General* is a period piece, a strangely delayed but instructive example of the genre so characteristic of the Thirties, when fellow-travellers constructed totalitarian paradises upon travesties of their democratic societies.

Greene professes to have no idea why he had been invited to Panama. This is disingenuous, to be kind about it. Torrijos was not offering something for nothing, he had a specific aim. In 1968, as a young officer in the National Guard, the country's only armed unit at the time, Torrijos had seized power and exiled the opposition. To protect himself, he had then recruited a paramilitary force known as the Wild Pigs, and ruled as an erratic but on the whole benevolent autocrat. His single serious political objective was to have a revised Canal Treaty with America, whereby as much as possible of the Canal Zone would be returned to Panama, with as many dollars as Washington could be induced to pay. Three previous American Presidents had agreed in principle to revisions, and after his election in 1976 Carter was as anxious as Torrijos to draw protracted negotiations to a close. In his memoirs, *Keeping Faith*, Carter explains how he liked and trusted Torrijos, and fought a recalcitrant Congress over a fair deal for Panama.

What lay behind the telegram to Greene was the need for a sympathetic presentation in opinion-making circles of the Panamanian case while negotiations were reaching a climax. The choice of Greene for such a presentation was inspired. Though obviously his own master, his record of anti-American agitation throughout the Cold War was already second to none among writers outside the Communist orbit. Over Viet Nam, Cuba, Chile, developments in Eastern Europe, he could be relied on to publish something to undermine whatever position the United States might have; he had resigned from the American Academy of Arts and Letters; he had signed petitions and written persistently to the press; he liked to vaunt his friendship with Castro and Allende, his tea-time chat with Ho Chi Minh; directly or indirectly, he had often expressed a preference for life within the Soviet bloc to life outside it. In his novels, those with positive or attractive roles had long been Marxists, while Americans had become stereotypes, either of greed or of a misplaced and damaging innocence.

AT A FIRST MEETING with Greene, his host the General was in dressing-gown and underpants, with bare feet. In the course of conversation the General produced the one and only memorable sentence which Greene records, one which also gave away the game:

> "Intellectuals are like fine glass, crystal glass, which can be cracked by a sound. Panama is made of rock and earth."

How in practice he set about producing the sound to crack this particular intellectual is the real interest of this book.

First of all, Greene had to be provided with the standards of comfort to which he was accustomed in Antibes. Understand-

[1] *Getting to Know the General*. By GRAHAM GREENE. Bodley Head, £8.95.

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ably for someone of his age, Greene was fretful on this score, and refers on almost every page to travel arrangements (always first-class, though Concorde was a sad disappointment), to hotel accommodation (the rooms were usually either too grand or too beastly), and to preoccupations with food and drink. "We had a not very good dinner. . . . When we reached Santiago, we had a very bad meal. . . . I ordered a gin, but whatever the bottle contained it wasn't gin . . . we lunched very badly in the mess of the Wild Pigs . . . a restaurant called Sarti's—an elegant one by Panama standards. . . ." Gastronomes in Panama will find here something of a standard reference work, with its recommendation, three times repeated, of dinner at the Marisco owned by a Basque, its praises for the Colón, and its warnings, also repeated three times, against the rum punches of the Holiday Inn.

To supervise Greene, the General allocated his own personal bodyguard, Chuchu Martínez. There was a humour about this, for Chuchu was a Marxist professor who in middle age had enrolled in the Wild Pigs; altogether a leading character, potentially, in what has become the typical Greene novel. Soon Chuchu was helping to produce the perfect sound for Greene, teaching him the Wild Pigs' song about pushing the Americans into the water, "where the sharks can eat *mucho Yanqui*." Military planes and helicopters whizzed him between plantation, mine, collective, and island resort. So quickly and thoroughly was Greene recruited to the Panama cause that he thought fit to confide to Torrijos his doubts about the trustworthiness of Colonel Flores, chief of staff of the National Guard. To Greene's surprise, Colonel Flores afterwards appeared to look at him askance. With impressions "clustering like bees round a queen", a lurid novel about the General and Chuchu did indeed start to find shape under the title *On the Way Back*—and behind the novel, naturally, this book.

The conducted tour culminated in the miserable slums where Panamanians none the less were managing to endure gaily, and the adjoining Canal Zone in which the Americans lived amid their glum banks and churches, talking of God and Country. At a political meeting of theirs, the main speakers were a man with legs "bandaged in tight brown trousers", which rubbed "perhaps to make music like a grasshopper", and a blue-haired old lady "like a Universal Aunt." Sarcasm was the only response to such freaks and their setting: "There seemed to be innumerable golf courses and you felt the jungle had been thrown back by a battalion of lawn-mowers."

1977, according to the General, was to be the year in which his patience and American excuses would finally run out. That point was well taken in the article which Greene published in *The New York Review of Books*, as early as 17 February 1977. He addressed himself to the iniquities of the American perception of Panama. "Panama is not an insignificant banana republic with politicians and presidents up for sale, nor is General Torrijos in any way a typical military dictator." Unless America ceded the whole case, war might well follow. It was intended as praise rather than contradiction to assert that Torrijos was establishing a popular democracy while dreaming as a soldier of the simple confrontation of violence with the United States. If this was the price of the freebie, as invited trips like Greene's are called in the trade, then it was paid eagerly.

THE PROPAGANDA EFFECT, if any, of this presentation of the Panama case was overtaken by events. 1977 actually proved the year of signing the revised Treaty. Torrijos held another timely card up his sleeve for Greene to play. Issuing Greene with a diplomatic passport, he enrolled him as an honorary member of the Panamanian delegation to Washington, to witness the Treaty's final ceremonies. It was Greene's luck that so many of his favourite hate-figures were also present, Generals Pinochet, Videla, Stroessner, Banzer of Bolivia, all with eyes too close, no neck, or other physical oddities for the novelist to pick upon. Carters and Kissingers and Rockefellers completed the ridiculous scene, along with the apparently colonialist Archbishop MacGrath (in spite of his name, a native Panamanian, though Greene does not say so). How long-sighted was Torrijos in his promotion of such satirical copy? Did his humour extend to the thought that those who were celebrating happily that there had been no simple confrontation of violence in Panama would one day be jeered for it by his honorary delegate and publicist, as though by a jester with a bladder?

In the anti-climax after the Treaty, Torrijos realised that Washington might take its friends for granted, but hastens to propitiate those who make nuisances of themselves. Too intelligent for crude anti-Americanism, he sought leverage through calculated sponsorship of the revolutions then impending in Nicaragua and El Salvador. Several high-level Sandinista guerrilla *Comandantes* and their beautiful girlfriends were given shelter in Panama, and Greene was soon introduced to them in expense-account restaurants. One of these revolutionaries even arrived in Antibes to raise money for arms. "Alas! I was of little use to him"—Greene may be revealing more of his cast of mind here than of his assets as a world best-seller—"I could only send off a small cheque of my own to Panama City in the hope that it would buy a few bullets, one of which might put paid to Somoza."

Of course Greene put paid to nobody and nothing, but once again, at no real cost to Panama or Torrijos, he could be given the chance to contribute effectively in print to the anti-American cause. Between 1978 and 1980, Chuchu flew him in military planes to see George Price, Prime Minister of a newly independent Belize ("there had been nothing really to report—except my liking for Price and my dislike of his Conservative enemies with their wild accusations, their violent opposition to independence and their fake Union Jack loyalty"); to the Sandinista junta in Managua; and finally to Castro in Cuba.

The usual concerns continued to surface:

> "Shrimp salad, the only edible form of food we were able to find in Belize . . . we sat down wet through to a meal quite as bad as any in Belize . . . the Continental Hotel was full of visitors for the occasion and we were driven to a very comfortable house beyond the periphery with two charming and pretty maids to look after us. . . ."

GOOD FOOD AND DRINK granted, Greene was able to relax in the chic circles of the international Marxist Left. He writes of the Sandinista leader Tomas Borge, "now a good friend to me."

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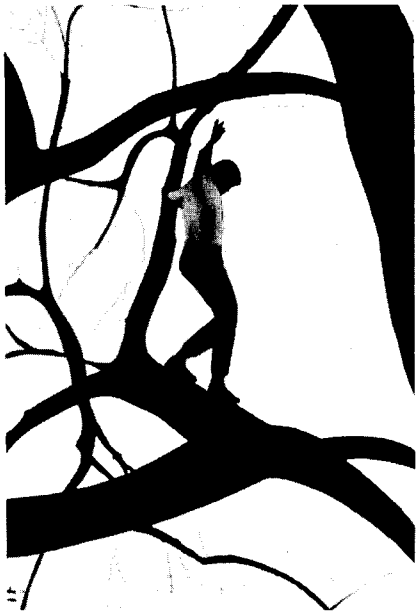

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> "At Managua I found some familiar faces on the tarmac to welcome me. Father Cardenal, the Minister of Culture, was there and Daniel Ortega's beautiful wife, Rosario, whom I had last seen in San José. . . . In the evening we went for our rendezvous to the house where my friend Garcia Marquez was installed. Castro had been dining at the Spanish Embassy with Gabo [the nickname of the writer Garcia Marquez]. I had not seen Castro since we passed some hours of the night together in 1966, and he had given me a painting by my friend Porto Carrero."

Such credentials were established that Greene was able to intervene with his Sandinista friends on behalf of a South African Ambassador whom they had kidnapped, but the man died in captivity.

Voice and style are those of the dowager tatlerising about dear days at court, with every grandee a friend. The élite has changed, the snobbery is the same. Many a detail slides towards spoof. Twice Greene assures us that Chilean wine on the table was bottled under Allende, not Pinochet, and therefore may be enjoyed. The Marisco's Basque owner is a refugee from Franco, so the luxury there is all right. What is nasty about Los Ranchos in Managua is that the other diners are in ties and waistcoats, for which reason they must be enemies, and in any case spoil the meal. When Greene discovers Chuchu loading clandestine weapons for El Salvador into the boot of his car, he exclaims, "I was overjoyed at this glimpse of Professor José de Jesús Martínez, poet and mathematician, at his proper job." It might be Baroness Orczy and the Scarlet Pimpernel.

Tomas Borge, fashioning a unitary Marxist state at gunpoint, is tidied up with the phrase, "There must often be an impatience with patience." Salvador Cayetano, who ordered the murder of the South African Ambassador, then almost certainly arranged for another Comrade *Comandante* to be assassinated, and finally shot himself, remains "a mystery." The Archbishop of Managua, as critical now of the Sandinistas as once he had been of Somoza, is acting out of wounded vanity. Eden Pastora, who broke with his former Sandinista associates, may be "tragic" but he also is "dangerous." Greene admits to speaking little or no Spanish, he interviewed no Miskito Indians, but still knows that these people have been removed to camps for their own good. An American nun told him so, and he has been quoting her ever afterwards, not only here but in letters to the press.

Admirers of complex novels about loyalty and betrayal, for instance *The Power and the Glory*, will wonder at these sentimental simplicities. If there are arguments against American policy and in favour of Marxist revolution in Central America, Greene does not make them. *Getting to Know the General* has no firmer foundation than a Nancy Mitford sort of feeling that because Americans have non-U trousers and hair-dos, everything they stand for is an abomination. Those who oppose vulgar America are by definition beyond criticism; what they say requires no corroboration, what they do requires only support.

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TOWARDS THE BOOK'S CLOSE, the thought strikes Greene that he might have been useful to someone else's purposes. It is no worry:

> "I have never hesitated to be 'used' in a cause I believed in, even if my choice might be only for a lesser evil. We can never foresee the future with any accuracy."

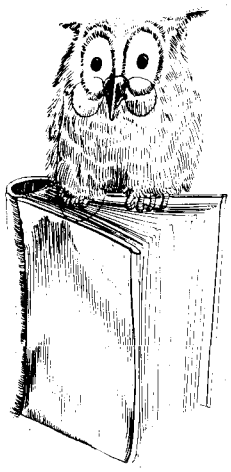
That last sentence seeks to dissolve the distinction between right and wrong, but Greene's choice here was never between a greater and a lesser evil. The options also existed of not accepting the freebies in the first place, and then of refusing to write tendentiously. Greene has a retort to that too: "If one takes a side, one takes a side, come what may." Political commitment at that level may serve a Boy Scout or a fellow-traveller, but not a writer of experience and independent means and standing.

General Torrijos died when his plane crashed in 1981. Chuchu, stout Party man, believes that the CIA was responsible, and Greene duly pushes himself into line. In his last conversation with his hero the General, Greene had aired "a favourite theory of mine that one day the *KGB* would be in control and it would prove more easy to deal with pragmatists than ideologists." Never mind that the *KGB* has been in control, never more openly than in the person of Andropov—would Greene be able to recognise the difference between a pragmatist and an ideologist, between the privilege of carrying in one's pocket a subsidised ticket to a safe home and the reality of imposed tyranny?

How little it takes to manipulate opinion, to crack an intellectual—and all from one telegram. The General was quite right.

Marvels of the Micro-Critic

Ricks & the Reading of Poems—By BERNARD BERGONZI



THESE ESSAYS show Christopher Ricks as the closest of close readers, conducting a series of master classes in how to read a poem, or, more often, a few lines of a poem.[1] In his "Prefatory Note" he offers an abrupt, succinct summary of the poets he writes about and the aspects of their work he is concerned with:

> "Summarily: the essay on Gower gives salience to diction and formulae. That on Marvell, to a particular figure of speech. That on Milton, to sound and sense. That on Johnson, to metaphors dead or alive. Those on Wordsworth, first, to line-endings, and second, to a part of speech, the preposition. That on Beddoes, to the vitality of language in relation to the celebration of death. That on Housman, to manner and movement. That on Empson, to the images and the story. That on Stevie Smith, to the resources of bathos. That on Lowell, to a particular kind of pun. That on Larkin, to tone. Those on Hill, to transition and punctuation, brackets and hyphens."

The essays on poets are followed by four that deal more generally with language and linguistic usage, on clichés, lies, misquotation, and the characteristics of American English.

At the heart of the book, in more than one sense, is a study of Empson, over 60 pages long. Ricks passionately admires Empson as poet and critic, and as a man, and his own critical method is essentially that which Empson presented to the world in *Seven Types of Ambiguity*. The critic looks intently, with microscopic closeness, at the poet's words on the page, focusing on puns, wordplay of all kinds, and the flickering interactions of meaning and suggestions of meaning between and around the words. Ricks is inveterate in the pursuit of puns, and he seldom resists them in his own prose, though they are thinner on the ground in these essays, which are rather formal and conscious of their original academic occasion or platform, than in his spirited literary journalism, which he has excluded from the collection.

Empson's way of reading looked unfamiliar in 1930, but it had some obvious antecedents: the work of his Cambridge supervisor I. A. Richards, and the now largely forgotten study of modern poetry by Robert Graves and Laura Riding. There was, too, the influence of Eliot's early criticism, with its brief but suggestive comments on short passages of poetry, which was much esteemed in Cambridge in the 1920s. Eliot as well as Empson lies behind Ricks's own criticism, as he acknowledges, quoting Eliot's praise of "that perpetual slight alteration of language, words perpetually juxtaposed in new and sudden combinations" and his dictum that "to be original with the *minimum* of alteration, is sometimes more distinguished than to be original with the *maximum* of alteration."

Ricks is splendidly astute in tracing minimal but significant effects. Where Empson restricted his attention to words, Ricks is equally concerned with words that aren't actually there, spaces between lines or at the ends of lines, punctuation marks, brackets, dashes and hyphens (and the difference between them), and variations in the poet's use of any of these. He looks at words, too, of course, and in his readings no word is too humble to be important; he scolds the compiler of the standard

[1] *The Force of Poetry*. By CHRISTOPHER RICKS. Oxford University Press, £19.50.

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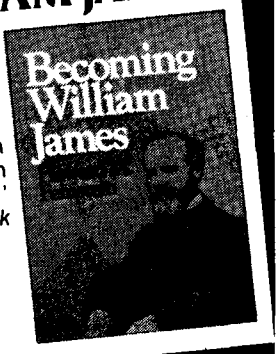

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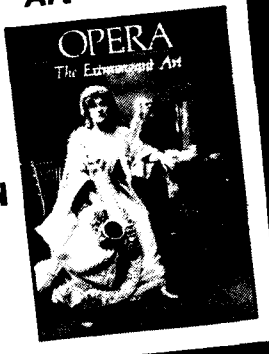

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Wordsworth concordance for leaving out the prepositions and conjunctions, modest parts of speech which are nevertheless at the heart of Wordsworth's art. Ricks's finesse and skill are remarkable; they make me think not only of the master musician, getting more out of his instrument than the ordinary performer would think possible, but of the marvels of small-scale surgery, involving incredibly delicate operations on the retina or the inner ear.

THE DIFFICULTY I FIND with Ricks's criticism is in moving from the micro-level where he operates with such ease and fascination, both to himself and to his readers, on to what one might call the ordinary human scale of criticism on which poems are read and assessed. There are places where Ricks does this satisfyingly, such as the essay on Milton, which makes a respectful but convincing reply to Leavis's attack on Milton's "externality." There is some characteristically Ricksian wordplay in his comment on the opening lines of *Paradise Lost*: "though the words do indeed work externally, they are not unfelt; what is alive in them is not the feeling of a fleshly heart but the heartfelt aspiration towards a spiritual heart." In discussing Philip Larkin, Ricks gives a pertinent account, in conventional literary-critical terms, of Larkin's combination of classical convictions and romantic impulses. The best essays on poets are those where he feels a compulsive attraction to and absorption in his subject, as he did in his book on Keats; in the present collection the poets given this particularly intense treatment are Geoffrey Hill and William Empson, though the essay on the latter seems to me unjustifiably long, overgenerous to some of Empson's most riddling poetry, and too eccentrically ingenious in its biographical speculations about why Empson stopped writing poetry after he became a father.

In other essays Ricks's commitment to micro-criticism presents the challenge of the Hermeneutic Circle, which is that we cannot make sense of the parts before we have made sense of the whole, and vice versa. Or, how does the minute analysis of local poetic events affect our reading of the total text, or at least larger sections of it than Ricks is usually able to look at? A similar question arose with a *locus classicus* of the formalist-structuralist approach to literary analysis: Roman Jakobson's laboriously detailed and systematic analysis of the language of a Shakespeare sonnet. Jakobson examines everything in the poem, which is altogether too much. Ricks, working in the Anglo-American tradition of close but selective reading, already, in a sense, knows what he is looking for, and directs his reading accordingly. Yet the difficulty in both cases is in getting from close reading to general statements; as the late Geoffrey Thurley pointed out in his book *Counter-Modernism in Current Critical Theory* (1983), the best Jakobson can do at the end of his exegesis is to offer a few banal and unoriginal reflections on the poem.

Ricks is averse to generalities. He is happiest when he can go on and on quoting examples of the kind of thing he is focusing on, piling them up to such an extent that admiration begins to turn to weariness, and then close the essay quite abruptly with a laconic comment, evading much in the way of a conclusion or relating of parts to the whole. The accumulation of interesting local detail does not necessarily have evaluative consequences;

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conversely, poems that no one thinks particularly good might well turn up some fascinating bits and pieces at the micro-level. This problem was well treated by Thurley.

One result of reading through *The Force of Poetry* is to make me feel rather coarse-minded, too much concerned with socio-cultural and other extra-literary matters. (This is perhaps the result of spending too long on Marxist criticism, if only to disagree with it). Ricks breathes a purer, more concentrated air. He is an admirer of Leavis, despite his difference from him about Milton, and might want to argue that "literary" qualities are not to be distinguished from broad human ones, notwithstanding the difficulty of reaching that position from the critical level at which he usually works—akin perhaps to racing for the bridge of the ship from the intricacies of the machinery in the engine-room.

It is interesting that one of Ricks's favourite words of approbation is "touching." This word indeed puts one in touch with the nakedly human, though it is perhaps a little grudging in comparison with that commoner piece of critical vocabulary, "moving." To call something "touching" may contain a hint of patronage and a too easy recognition of pathos. And if one proceeds, in Ricksian fashion, to unpack the implications and trace the associations of the word, then one comes upon "to have the touch" and "touchy", "to be a bit touched" and "a soft touch." These are all qualities which touch on Ricks's criticism: his finesse and his occasional irascibility, his moments of eccentricity and his readiness to go overboard for certain kinds of poetic effect.

Notwithstanding Ricks's tact with texture, I tend to prefer the final essays in the book, where he engages with prose and the qualities of the language at large, and all the human qualities that get caught up in linguistic discussions. I especially admire the one called "Walter Pater, Matthew Arnold and Misquotation." Ricks's premise here is that all critics are liable to misquote (as his admired Empson did abundantly in *Seven Types*). He shows that when Pater misquotes he makes his subject seem more delicate, more fastidious, more refined than the actual words indicate. Pater has a great relish for the comparative form, which he frequently imposes on his authors; as an example Ricks shows what Pater does with some lines from the first act of *Measure for Measure*: "Spirits are not freely touched,/But to fine issues":

> "Pater wanted something finer than fineness. 'In *Measure for Measure*', he begins his essay, 'as in some other of his plays, Shakespeare has remodelled an earlier and somewhat rough composition to "finer issues" '—and already Pater's own remodelling has begun. . . . Pater had a greed for fineness: but something other than greed is involved, as is clear from his not grinding on up to the word 'finest'."

And Ricks goes on to show, with many examples, how pervasive was this intellectual and temperamental bias of Pater's.

He contrasts Pater, to his disadvantage, with Matthew Arnold, whose misquotations from poetry are likely to make the original seem flatter and more ordinary. Ricks finds such misquotation more acceptable and forgivable than Pater's, since Arnold is not trying to be a "creative" critic and, albeit unconsciously, improve the original. Ricks describes himself as "someone who believes that Arnold's little finger is worth Pater's whole hand of little fingers." That is a rather wonderful phrase, which anyone might be pleased to have thought of, but I am not sure if critics ought to engage in such flights, especially if they are denouncing criticism that wants to be like, or be, literature itself. I am reminded of a sour remark by Raymond Williams about Arnold's recourse, in *Culture and Anarchy*, to what he calls "a kind of witty and malicious observation better suited to minor fiction." Still, as Ricks would point out, Williams is writing like Pater in using the "kind of" locution as an attempt at subtlety and refinement; he deplores it as a very common usage in Pater and many later writers.

Ricks is entertaining and damaging about Pater, though I think that Pater remains a more important force in cultural and intellectual history than he would want to admit. Part of the strategy of his essay is to identify Pater with Harold Bloom, who finds that Pater's writings agreeably blur the distinction, which Bloom rejects, between literature and criticism; in attacking Pater, Ricks is attacking Bloom and other critics who think like him.

Apart from this one instance, Ricks remains aloof and silent about the subversions offered by the newer and newest criticism, which he is said to have got on the wrong side of during

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the days of "the McCabe Affair" at Cambridge. *The Force of Poetry* shows "Canon" Ricks, as some have dubbed him, to be an acute and learned conservative, committed to the tradition of English Literature in all its riches, and in total possession of an immense amount of its poetry, major and minor. Yet opposed poles can resemble each other in striking though unexpected ways. The relentless playfulness with language, the lust for puns, the willingness to go a long way for a good phrase; where else do we find them but in an eminent critic of a different persuasion, whom I cannot imagine Ricks giving the time of day to: Jacques Derrida.

The jacket of this book quotes on the back a phrase I once used in reviewing Ricks's *Keats and Embarrassment*: "a work of enormous brilliance." I stand by that, and would willingly apply it to the present book. But "brilliant" often implies a "but", as in "brilliant but unsound"; in Ricks's case one might come up with "brilliant but narrow." This is not necessarily a bad combination of qualities; they could suggest an intense beam of light which would revivify the critical cliché, "brilliantly illuminating." Such a beam might also be "dazzling", which would be tolerable, or "bedazzling", which wouldn't.

Pre-Modern, Post-Modernist

Recent Fiction—By JAMES LASDUN

"I MAKE no claims for my particular sort of writing, although I understand that it is doing quite well. . . ." Like her heroine Edith Hope, a writer of romantic fiction, and author of this modest assertion, Anita Brookner owes her perhaps unlikely success with *Hotel du Lac*[1] to a resolute distancing of herself from contemporary literary mores. Edith Hope, it is suggested, writes old-fashioned romances, where the good girl gets the right man, and where there is no explicit sex: not Mills & Boon exactly, more the sort of thing one imagines Betty Trask had in mind when she bequeathed her award for high-quality novels of a romantic, non-experimental nature.

The old-fashioned virtues that seem to have helped Anita Brookner to win her Booker Prize were partly ones of style—a classical propriety in the organisation of her story, and a prose that would not have seemed unusual a hundred years ago—and partly ones of subject matter: love, marriage, social nuance. A discreet reference, in the text, to Henry James confirms him as a model for both. The phrasing and cadencing of the sentences have a flavour that is strongly reminiscent of James—"It was to be supposed that . . .", "an unexpected note of glamour in the person of a lady of indeterminate age . . ."—as is the portrait painted, of a lady whose vision of happiness-as-the-Right-Marriage is ironically, almost tragically, undermined.

On its own terms, *Hotel du Lac* comes as close to a kind of flawlessness as it is possible to imagine in a novel written today. The story of Edith Hope's temporary banishment by her friends to an out-of-season hotel on Lake Geneva, for jilting her affectionate but dull betrothed at the registry office, is beautifully unfolded. Her observations of the foibles of the hotel guests (almost all of them involved in Jamesian machinations to entrap partners) are acute, if sometimes based on caste values that now seem anachronistic—i.e. "the kind of man who calls a shop a retail outlet." Pacing, alternation between incident and recollection, descriptions of the melancholic scenery . . . all these are handled with perfect poise. Even the formal dialogue, rarefied to a state beyond any connection with real speech, has a correctness about it; an irrefutable appropriateness to the thoughts it is used to express:

> "You are a lady, Edith. They are rather out of fashion these days, as you may have noticed. As my wife, you will do very well. Unmarried, I'm afraid you will soon look a bit of a fool."

It is only when one is asked to consider *Hotel du Lac* as a novel worthy of our supposedly highest literary accolade that its deliberate limitations of scope and style begin to look like inadequacies. Exquisite as they often are, the narrative pleasures it offers—the small climaxes of moral discovery, the intelligent conversations about love and so forth—address themselves to nostalgia for a range of concerns that, under the kind of scrutiny a Booker winner ought to bear, will seem ultimately remote.

In this light, the fine distinction played upon by Anita Brookner, between her heroine's literary sensibility and her own, becomes blurred. The cosy optimism of one, and the elegant scepticism of the other, appear more like two sides of the same coin; one that owes its surprisingly high purchasing power to the large numbers of readers, and literary judges, who favour the pre-modern, the decidedly non-experimental, in their contemporary reading.

THE NOVELISATION—if that is quite the word—of a once-celebrated Victorian murder case sounds perhaps even more calculated to appeal to the nostalgic than *Hotel du Lac*.

[1] *Hotel du Lac*. By ANITA BROOKNER. Jonathan Cape, £7.95.

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However, this is far from the truth. *Watson's Apology*[2] is an ambitious, original novel that manages to do full justice to its setting in the last century, without ever forgetting it is a work of this. Letters, newspaper articles, Home Office papers and trial reports provided Beryl Bainbridge with the bare bones of her story, and many of these documents are included in the book. As for the flesh—as she herself puts it: "What has defeated historical inquiry has been the motives of the characters, their conversations and their feelings. These it has been the task of the novelist to supply."

In 1844 the Rev. J. S. Watson, headmaster of a school in Stockwell, began writing to Anne Armstrong, a woman he had met years earlier in Ireland. The burden of his cautious, polite letters was marriage, and although Anne Armstrong had no recollection of her suitor, her present circumstances were so dismal that any prospect of release from them was to be leapt at. The two married early the following year, and spent the next 25 gradually destroying each other with a deepening mixture of carelessness, misunderstanding, resentment, and bad luck. By 1871, Anne had disintegrated into a bitter, incontinent old woman, tormented by jealousy and scorn for her husband, who in turn was so disastrously thwarted in his career, his literary ambitions, and his marriage, that his reason had begun to stray. In October 1871, after a particularly quarrelsome period, he beat Anne to death with a pistol butt.

Beryl Bainbridge unearths no mysteries to account for the catastrophe. On the contrary, her achievement is to show how very ordinary and unmysterious were the forces at play upon Mr Watson and his wife. Both had their share of oddities and personal traumas to put up with, but what propelled them towards tragedy was an accumulation of the kinds of mutual disappointments that could afflict any marriage under similar circumstances—a promise of a holiday that takes Watson eight years to fulfil because of his consuming literary endeavours, irrational jealousy on Anne's part bred out of neglect, vindictiveness born from jealousy. . . . Marriage, in short, as a slow, protracted quarrel, where the original misdeed is long forgotten, but where blow and counterblow continue to be exchanged mercilessly.

Historical reality is a notoriously difficult proposition for a novelist to tackle, dead people being much more difficult to bring to life than purely imaginary ones. It takes some time for the Watsons to emerge into visibility from the sometimes fragmentary conversations and incidents with which Bainbridge evokes them. Anne remains a perplexing character to the end; a solution—not always wholly satisfactory—to the enigmatic shreds of documentation from which Bainbridge has assembled her. In her husband, however, contradiction and inconsistency somehow acquire the texture of real life. His schoolmasterly pedantry, his impulsive charitableness, the disastrous combination of pity and selfishness he exhibits towards his wife, his abhorrence of violence in general and his own private act of violence, even his apparent lack of remorse—all these qualities are singled out by Bainbridge with impeccable judgment, the result being an individual with a complexity of mind that is rare in fiction. There is a poignant moment about half-way through the novel: presented, to his surprise and joy, with a silver salver for his service to the school, Watson is moved to extemporise on one of his beloved subjects:

> "The purpose of Tragedy was not to free one from pity or terror, nor to purge one by allowing the discharge of such feelings, but to bring one face to face with the awful truths of human existence."

On the next page, four years later, he is dismissed from his headmastership without reason, a blow that effectively sentences him to penury for the rest of his days. The intent of the juxtaposition is clear: Watson is to be regarded as a figure of tragic stature. An unlikely candidate perhaps, but it is with no feelings at all of having been manipulated that one acquiesces in Bainbridge's implicit judgment of her character, and that is a measure of the depth and fullness with which she has imagined him.

INTENT IS THE HARDEST THING to gauge in Muriel Spark's *The Only Problem*.[3] There seems to be a deliberate division of focus in it. On the one hand it presents itself as a drama of benighted sexual relationships among a highly incestuous collection of friends and acquaintances. On the other, it appears to be conducting an inquiry into the problem referred to by its title, "the problem of suffering", with specific reference to the *Book of Job*. Naturally, one expects the two to reflect and enrich each other; perhaps ultimately to resolve themselves into a complex, satisfactory whole.

In the first part it looks as if this might happen. Harvey Gotham, a wealthy, mildly reclusive Canadian living in France, is immersed in the problem of equating human suffering with a belief in God. To this end, he is writing a treatise on the *Book of Job*. He is also at the centre of the incestuous network, which comprises his beautiful ex-wife Effie whom he abandoned after she stole two bars of chocolate, claiming her act was a gesture against capitalism, Effie's opportunist sister Ruth, Ruth's curate-turned-actor husband Edward, and an assortment of past, present and prospective lovers. Not a great deal happens: some shuffling of partners, some intriguing but teasingly brief speculations on Job from Harvey:

> "If you believe that there is a Creator, a God, and that he is good, the only logical answer to the problem of suffering is that the individual soul has made a pact with God before he is born, that he will suffer during his lifetime."

But there is a definite impression of authorial command, a sense of steady movement towards revelation.

However, part two does more to mystify than enlighten. Effie turns out to be involved in an improbable-sounding terrorist group called FLE—*Front de la Libération de l'Europe*. She is wanted in connection with armed robberies, and later on with the murder of a policeman. Though long separated from her, Harvey is suspected of harbouring her somewhere, and of financing her organisation. Certain innocent eccentricities of his—not least his obsession with Job—turn him into an object of suspicion, and for a period his

[2] *Watson's Apology*. By BERYL BAINBRIDGE. Duckworth, £8.95.
[3] *The Only Problem*. By MURIEL SPARK. Bodley Head, £7.95.

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life is taken over, his privacy invaded, by prying policemen and journalists.

It would be convenient to regard all this as an imposition of Job-like suffering upon Harvey, but there is little evidence in the novel that Muriel Spark is interested in drawing so neat a parallel. In fact, she seems at pains to stress Harvey's near indifference to the surreal calamities occurring all around him. Substitute "patience" for "indifference", and perhaps her aim becomes easier to understand, patience of course being Job's exemplary virtue. But even this interpretation must be offered tentatively; the story becomes too thickly strewn with clues, all of them pointing in different directions, for its centre ever to be satisfactorily located.

JAYNE ANNE PHILLIPS'S FIRST BOOK, *Black Tickets*, was a collection of sensuous and macabre short stories that won much acclaim for their offbeat, incandescent poetry. Whatever they promised in the way of a novel, it could hardly have been the solid family saga spanning sixty-odd years of small town American life that *Machine Dreams*[4] turns out to be. For all that, *Machine Dreams* is a magnificent first novel; an epic of recall, both personal (it must be at least partly autobiographical) and on behalf of two generations of America.

It is a difficult book to do justice to; the writing is lyrical, subtly modulated to suit the various voices that tell the story, but it is seldom showy in a way that lends itself to quotation. You have to look hard to see how much care, how little fuss, goes into it—even into a simple description of cows:

> "It used to occur to me at the age of seven and eight how stupid these cows were—like big warm rocks. Though we came to the barn every day at regular times, they didn't recognise us except as they'd recognise rain or snow. They didn't even have the nervousness and greed of the chickens, but ate placidly, like machines. The only time they seemed at all human was at calving, and that was terrible to watch. They bawled in pain and seemed bewildered, as though they didn't know what hurt them. Then the calf was out on the straw, blinking."

Then too, the tale itself, while rich in detail and incident, contains little that could be called spectacular. Extremes of human experience are there—war, in both the Pacific and Viet Nam, consummation and destruction of love, failing fortunes, death—but Jayne Anne Phillips scrupulously resists exploiting these for any intrinsic emotive properties they may possess, treating even so potentially grotesque a figure as an ostracised Chinese leper, discovered working for the B & O Railroad, with the same compassionate but steady tone she brings to the more mundane characters and events that occupy most of the book. In other words, her moments of intensity, the illuminatory passages to which the story rises from time to time, depend solely on her skill as an artist, rather than on any simple appeal to common experience, which is of course what dis-

[4] *Machine Dreams*. By JAYNE ANNE PHILLIPS. Faber and Faber, £8.95.

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tinguishes the saga from soap opera. The horror of war, for example, is brought home with a startling immediacy when Mitch, a veteran from the Pacific, takes his invalid, adoptive little sister Katie to the cartoon cinema. While she enjoys the rare outing, wrapped in a blanket, he drifts off into a memory of combat, wakes up to see a black edge of burning film on the screen, and loses his charge in the panicked stampede of people fleeing the cinema, finding her again outside:

> "He saw her then, leaning against the wall of the opposite building, her shoes gone, her coat unbuttoned. Her eyes were big and shocked, and as he pushed his way toward her she waved to him feebly, apologetically, as though afraid she'd done wrong. . . . She looked over his shoulder at the crowd, fascinated, and said in a small voice, 'Was that like the war?' "

That refraction of one experience through another occurs again and again throughout the novel, unifying its many strands, giving reverberation and depth to the narrative. Mitch sets up a concrete haulage company, which he has to sell when his partner dies. Years later, when Mitch is reduced to phone-selling machinery and insurance, his daughter Danner and her boy-friend Riley discover that the Mitch Concrete plant is the ideal place for late-night petting in Riley's car. The painful break-up of their relationship begins there: a haunting scene that takes half its power from the melancholy shadow of the past that hangs over it.

As impressive as her handling of the human dramas is Jayne Anne Phillips's grasp of the world of machines. As the title suggests, the stories of Mitch and his wife Jean, of their children Danner and Billy, are intimately linked with the fortunes of American technology. The passing of time is marked by new models of cars, all lavishly described. Almost every salient incident involves a machine—the bulldozers Mitch uses to clear dead Japanese soldiers from Ora Bay, the Chevrolet trucks from the concrete plant emblazoned with his name, the cars they all court in, Apollo 11, the planes that haunt Billy as a child, the helicopter he is shot down in over a Viet Nam jungle. . . . The characters' dreams are cluttered with machinery, and some of the most revealing definitions of their mental states are provided through the medium of the machines they handle, or mishandle:

> "Danner imagined Mitch looking. In the home movies there were always a few dim frames of his face as he held the movie camera in his hands and pondered it, filming himself as he pushed the wrong button. His head filled the frame, lit on one side by tentative light. In the fish-eye view of the camera, his broad forehead curved in near darkness like the smooth plain of an awesome, lonely planet. . . ."

MARTIN AMIS's *Money*[5] is a jazz novel. Like the most sophisticated jazz music, it appropriates the hard-earned discoveries—the technical and aesthetic advances—pioneered in less accessible forms, divests them of anything smacking of difficulty or tedium, and then jazzes them up.

The ideal reader for *Money* is someone with passing interest in the phenomemon of metafiction, and a faint feeling that he or she might have missed out on something by never reading people like William Burroughs. Here are the ludic textual subversions of the one, the nightmare, planet-earth-as-hell visions of the other—the former solicitously signposted from first page to last, the latter sanitised to a level of just decent indecency.

The priority of a jazz novel is to keep its readers entertained: if ever a novel could be called remorselessly entertaining, that novel is *Money*. It is reader-friendly to the point of unctuousness. Nearly every sentence pays its way with an elaborate trope, a gem of wit, or one of those instantly satisfying visual puns ("the telephone's lone dreadlock") that are the trademark of the so-called "Martian" school with which the author is associated. Amis's prodigious virtuosity in these matters is not in dispute, but he writes as if it were. By the end of the book I felt I had been bludgeoned with brilliance, that I'd been in the presence of a performer so eager to give me my money's worth of expertise that almost nothing else had been accomplished.

Perhaps that is an underlying purpose: *Money* is after all a novel about itself in every sense, and it is appropriate that its preoccupations with the pervasive corruptions of lucre should be reflected at the level of style. This is the capitalist style *par excellence*, dealing in paragraphs that can be quantitively evaluated for their yield of felicities. Like money itself, it is confident that there is nothing—no subject, however abstruse—it cannot profit from. Like money, too, it homogenises all that it touches. Global politics, hangovers, sex, the metaphysics of Time, morality, urban squalor, the vanity of actors—everything is assimilated into the money style, and everything comes out, somehow, the same: funny, clever, and unreal.

Here is John Self, the debauched would-be film-maker who narrates the book, describing some of the physical pains that afflict him ceaselessly:

> "My head is a city, and various pains have now taken up residence in various parts of my face. A gum-and-bone ache has launched a cooperative on my upper west side. Across the park, neuralgia has rented a duplex in my fashionable east seventies. Downtown my chin throbs with lofts of jaw-loss. As for my brain, my hundreds, it's Harlem up there, expanding in the summer fires. It boils and swells. One day soon it is going to burst."

The conceit deserves a round of applause, certainly. But does the paragraph engage with any real sense of pain? Hardly, and to a large extent this sacrifice of engagement to virtuosity is characteristic of the whole novel. However much John Self tells me about his pornographic appetites, his obscene binges in London and New York, however grotesquely he portrays those cities and their inhabitants, from his mercenary girl-friend to the monstrous film people he has to deal with as he embarks on his first feature, however anguished he claims he is about age and money and junk culture, all I ever want to do is applaud him for being so witty about it. That is of course an achievement on Amis's part, and must be acknowledged. The set-

[5] *Money*. By MARTIN AMIS. Jonathan Cape, £8.95.

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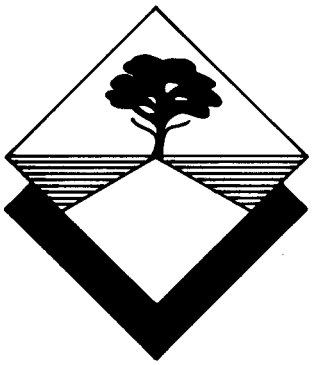
piece descriptions of tennis matches, of smelly suits and brothels, the handling of Self's slummy transatlantic idiom, the way in which abstract ideas like Punishment or Memory or Weather become fleetingly anthropomorphosed into minor, menacing characters, the sheer energy of the writing—all these are marvellously impressive, and represent a high degree of refinement in Amis's unmistakable manner.

The achievement doesn't absolutely stop there: Amis clearly intends the junk-food and alcohol-fuelled visions of *Money* to carry the same sort of authority as the nightmares (fuelled by an altogether different kind of junk) of *The Naked Lunch*—a book with which it has distinct affinities. To this end, he endows John Self with a moral sense, which Self is able to express simultaneously with his relish for all things immoral, without too much contortion: "What is this state", he wonders as he recalls an encounter with a young pregnant prostitute, "seeing the difference between good and bad and choosing bad."

Occasional passages like this give an impression, at least, of a moral dimension to the novel. And coupled with them are the insistent hints that what we are reading isn't fiction at all, but metafiction—the narrator's name, a character called Martin Amis who rewrites John Self's film script for him, a St Martin's hospital, a Martina who very nearly saves John Self from himself, a last-minute revelation that Self's entire adventure in the film industry has been a gruesome practical joke at his expense. . . . How far these pieces of auto-reference modify one's response to the narrative will vary from reader to reader. My own feeling is that they are decorative rather than structural: lip-service gestures toward post-modernist orthodoxy that, like John Self's moral sense, deepen the jazzy texture, but don't actually transform it.

Responsibilities

Recent Poetry—By JOHN MOLE



WHEN ASKED the reason why he wrote poetry, Louis MacNeice's answer was characteristically plain-spoken: "Because I get restless when I'm not writing it." Many poets, I suspect, know that feeling of restlessness only too well, but too often their response to it merely occasions the occasional. The gap between urge and compulsion, inclination and necessity, widens to a gulf which receives poem after poem whose feeble, *willed* life is spent long before it hits bottom. You can see it lying there, imprinted, but you'll wait for ever for the echo. More than likely, although it never became a recognisable shape, it tried to be *about* one. How many poets, in search of material, have gone to the cupboard in which they keep their pet numinous objects, or simply toyed with the properties immediately to hand—the dolour of pad and paperweight, the misery of manilla folders, etc. Desk death.

These thoughts are prompted by a fine sequence of six short poems in Seamus Heaney's new collection *Station Island.*[1] Resisting the application of what I've just been describing, it's called "Shelf Life." At a glance it appears to be a random hoard of oddments, including a granite chip, a smoothing iron and a snow-shoe, which radiate a conveniently talismanic glow—the kind of clutch a lesser poet would work up into a mildly resonant, emblematic repository of his modest preoccupations. Sufficient unto a working day.

What Heaney has done, though, through an intense act of concentration in which inclination, ambition and memory combine and conspire, is to hold a dialogue with himself in which the items become intermediaries. They keep their own small shapes but they are intimate with his large concerns. "*Seize / the day*" commands the granite chip, anticipating the words of James Joyce who appears as the final familiar ghost in the much more theatrically self-communing central section of the book—of which more in a moment—and tells Heaney not to be so earnest: "let others wear the sackcloth and the ashes./ Let go, let fly, forget./ You've listened long enough. Now strike your note." Or again, in "Old Pewter"—"I love unshowy pewter, my soft option/ when it comes to the metals"—contemplation of the object becomes *subjective* in its precise definition of a temperament, this time anticipating (with a crucial pun) Heaney's later claim that "I have no mettle for the angry role."

Unshowy, soft—though never soft-centred—alert to the hidden sources, a diviner who once pointed out his delight in the accidental rhyming of *word* and *stirred*, and who rhymed "to set the darkness echoing", Heaney has the great gift of being able to present himself as a poet on active duty so that however occasional the event that concerns him, or however fugitive the feelings that occasion the words, the resultant poem is one more witness to necessity:

> *Anyhow, there I was with the wet red stone*
> *in my hand, staring across at the watch-towers*
> *from my free state of image and allusion,*
> *swooped on, then dropped by trained binoculars:*

[1] *Station Island.* By SEAMUS HEANEY. Faber and Faber, £5.95, paper £2.95.

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a silhouette not worth bothering about,
out for the evening in scarf and waders
and not about to set times wrong or right,
stooping along, one of the venerators.

Although defining how he might be seen through the lenses of those "trained binoculars" which are to be found on any border where politics draws the line, the last two lines of that quotation from "Sandstone Keepsake" are far from being ironic. Heaney is indeed "one of the venerators." He cherishes his free state of image and allusion. It is where, as he puts it in "A Migration", "quick and silent/ the deer of poetry" stands "in pools of lucent sound/ ready to scare." It is "The Birthplace" where

We come back emptied
to nourish and resist
the words of coming to rest:

birthplace, roofbeam, whitewash,
flagstone, hearth,
like unstacked iron weights. . . .

The nourishment comes before the resistance. In fact, it gives birth to the resistance as an inner check to avoid the temptation of nostalgia and sentimentality. This is one kind of responsibility—the inherently poetic—and it is second nature to a poet of Heaney's quality. In short, it is the note Joyce's ghost urges him to strike.

Which brings us to "Station Island." Yes, it is an important sequence, though it seems to me to be written rather too much in the knowledge that it is so. Its twelve sections (five of them in the terza rima of Dante's *Divine Comedy*) are set on Station Island on Loch Derg in County Donegal where Heaney, in an uneasy spirit of penitential vigil, encounters a succession of ghosts including William Carleton, Patrick Kavanagh and—most poignantly—his second cousin, victim of a sectarian killing. He has sought them out as an exercise in expiation, and they are quick to turn shelf life into Self Life.

The ventriloquised self-accusations range from gentle recrimination to out-and-out castigation. They raise questions of responsibility to past, present and future, to the race, to the unresolved tragedy of historical circumstance. They are interspersed with sensuous recreations of a Catholic boyhood ("I was back among bead clicks and the murmurs/ from inside confessionals")—the seed-time of Heaney's soul—which, while they may lack the dramatic impact of the more portentous encounters, nevertheless keep in view the instinctive Wordsworthian strain in Heaney, linking him too, of course, to Kavanagh: "*For what is the great/ moving power and spring of verse? Feeling, and/ in particular, love.*" As a whole, "Station Island" is never less than sonorous. It is a deeply considered work, an application and extension of Heaney's troubled sense of responsibility to a wide and densely-textured canvas. To return to "Shelf Life" after reading it is to experience an added dimension of richness in the more successful, if less ambitious, poems which make up the first section of the book.

The third and closing section of *Station Island* is a series of poems voiced by Sweeney, the legendary Irish King who was turned into a bird because he cursed St Ronan. It runs parallel to *Sweeney Astray*, Heaney's own excellent translation of the medieval work *Buile Suibhne*.[2] In his introduction to this translation, Heaney writes: "insofar as Sweeney is also a figure of the artist, displaced, guilty, assuaging himself by his utterance, it is possible to read the work as an aspect of the quarrel between free creative imagination and the constraints of religious, political and domestic obligation." Not surprisingly, then, the poems in "Sweeney Redivivus" seem caught between the instincts of section one (the "free state of image and allusion") and the imperatives of section two. There are marvellous moments in them, such as the opening of "The First Kingdom":

The royal roads were cow paths.
The queen mother hunkered on a stool
and played the harpstrings of milk
into a wooden pail.
With seasoned sticks the nobles
lorded it over the hindquarters of cattle.

But there seems a simultaneous drive to force them into straitjackets of syntactical obscurity which, perhaps, embody those very same "constraints of religious, political and domestic obligation." Obligation, that is, at odds with observation.

Despite all reservations, I find *Station Island* an immensely impressive book, and regret the need to rush into print about it. I should prefer, for a while, to remain turning over in my imagination this palpable image of Heaney's poetry: a deer caught in the thicket of circumstance, the agile companion of that "wood-kerne/ escaped from the massacre" (though always within earshot of it) who goes on weighing his responsible *tristia* in a language of rare intelligence and beauty.

PETER PORTER weighs his *tristia* in the strict balance of a deceptively conversational verse, and seldom finds them wanting. His many ghosts and responsibilities are in the modulations, the finely-tuned machine of a habitual melancholy. Like the later Auden—whose arch lexicon he sometimes dips into at the most unlikely moments ("I could outlive my wife/ but never be natured into the space/ which she proprietored")—he spends a lot of time talking to himself within hearing of God and the gods with their interchangeable upper and lower casings. At one point in his new collection he quotes Thomas Hardy, a fellow ruminator and predisposed to stoicism—"Tragedy is true guise"—and much of *Fast Forward*[3] is concerned to exemplify "that Augustinian fairness which gives us metaphors/ Appropriate to our condition."

Although many of these metaphors—as they have always been in Porter's work—are drawn from contemporary life and often sparkle with a knowing metropolitan wit, they serve a sober classical temperament which keeps surfacing in a series of monitory statements, variations on his central theme that we are "doomed to claim/all that we envisage." However fast the tape runs forward, the world's "terrible moments return as jokes." In fact the cassette, like digital time, is an illusion. Experience does not run forward and backward at the touch of

[2] *Sweeney Astray*. By SEAMUS HEANEY. Faber and Faber, £5.95, paper £2.95.

[3] *Fast Forward*. By PETER PORTER. Oxford University Press, £4.50.

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a button, even though in our global nightmare "the fire has crept into a governed switch." Porter binds his readers on to the age-old loop of desire and its consequences, the recognition (Hardy again) that jokes anticipate the consummation of their own terrible moments:

> *tee-shirts at Paphos*
> *Are printed with postures of fucking*
> *And the silent amphitheatre sings to the sea.*
>
> *Waves which bore the Greeks round the world*
> *Have sunk now to evenings in theatres,*
> *More like Noh Plays and The Gang Show*
> *Than Tragedy, capital T. . . .*

Porter is a much-travelled poet, and everywhere he stops off reinforces his convictions. Even his *trouvés* become sonorities. At "Santa Cecilia in Trastevere", " 'This not/ unpleasing Eighteenth Century church' (I quote)/ enfolds a darkness round our lightest step." One suspects that he knew it would—which was why he went in. "The urn below the soil . . . is for geographers of finished love." While often seeming to envy those "secure in perfect night" or "enjoying eternal rest" with an almost Sophoclean relish, Porter is always lured back to the ambiguous delights of unfinished business, just as

> *Our learning told us that the gods came down*
> *Not to impose their rule on croft and creek*
> *But to take holidays away from dark*
> *In this domain more beautiful than theirs. . . .*

I finished *Fast Forward* with the sense of having been in the company of a crepuscular temperament which nevertheless celebrates this beautiful domain, "creation's plain tenure, the warrant of birds."

ANOTHER OF THE VENERATORS is Geoffrey Grigson, and celebration of creation's plain tenure in all its variousness is the chief impulse of his poetry. His insistent, often combative lyricism seizes every opportunity for "loving/ in words", for the demonstrative affirmation of being alive in the shadow of mortality. As he's grown older—he'll be eighty this year—his relish for the natural world, his capacity for amazement and his sense of sheer "bloody wonder" have increased to a pitch where seeing and feeling seem to have become a kind of instant utterance—brief, packed and memorably vivid. In the title poem of *Montaigne's Tower*[4] he hopes that it was here "that Montaigne wrote" because the view so exactly corresponds to his own perspective:

> *He looks down, with feeling he sees again*
> *How exceedingly sweet is this meadowed*
> *Small valley below and how half-redding*
> *Vines in such a light cast straight*
> *Black bars of shadow in row after row.*

Those black bars, given an added resonance by his awareness that he has been standing inside a tower, are, in fact, cast by

[4] *Montaigne's Tower*. By GEOFFREY GRIGSON. Secker & Warburg, £5.95.

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nature herself. Where Grigson is actually standing is in the prison of his days, which have taught him—in the words of his admired Auden—how to praise. Poem after poem shows him watching the play of light and darkness on loved scenes and objects. In "Swallows at Sparrowthorn":

Watching late in June earth's green hair
Lazily tossed by intermittent winds
In sunshine, after rain,
I say inevitable pleasure again
Drives out inevitable pain.

The pain is often in the physical process of ageing. Grigson imagines Montaigne "going/ Slowly as if arthritically outside" but it is hard not to sense that pain as his own, and in a marvellous poem, "Elegy for Extra-Homes", a more elderly man (Montaigne was, after all, only 59 when he died) is absorbed in his own dark thoughts while nature goes on teeming around him:

And cleavers, how insistently cleavers
Climbs in all corners. He's been cut into. He can lift
Nothing. She must lift all. He sleeps after eating. Hell,
Sole Hell he fears now, is horrible dying, asking, asking

Well, was it worth it? "It" is that consequential, oddest
Of accidents. "It" equals living, is all he recalls,
All he's forgotten. . . .

The answer Grigson's poetry gives is to relish that "consequential, oddest/ Of accidents" (Yes it was, yes it is, worth it), to call a poem "Alive", to make it a list of affections and to say (with that touch of the short fuse which is so unmistakably his):

Accuse me of making a list.
Very well, I make such a list . . .
And my old list is alive; and continues.

Accuse him who dares!

I WONDER HOW MANY modest, authentic poets owe, perhaps, their surviving singletons to Grigson the anthologist. In a field where so many compilers are content merely to gather other compilers' flowers, he has made the most unlikely corners his own as well as finding unexpected rarities out on the common, and we are so much the richer for it. His latest, *The Faber Book of Reflective Verse*,[5] is, he announces, likely to be his last. If he has successors, let them consider the late Dunstan Thompson's *Poems 1950–1974*.[6] Thompson, who published in the 1940s and early 1950s, virtually ceased to appear in print after the mid-fifties but continued writing for a further twenty or so years.

As the recent re-emergence of the excellent E. J. Scovell has demonstrated, such silence can eventually prove golden. Thompson's posthumous collection is a bulky one, and much of it, it has to be said, is an unimpressive mixture of stodge and gossip; but a number of its shorter lyrical pieces contain beautiful cadences, and a few of them are immaculate. "In the Church at Ticehurst" has gone straight into my commonplace book:

Here lyeth the body of Adrian May,
Second Son, and Gentleman.
Sepulchral images of clay
Call in the youthful summer day.

But there is nothing here to say.
He died when he was young. Begin,
Dissembling Flowers, to array
Cold autumn come to early May.

Yet stay. What Greek would turn away
From one so fortunate? To win
In spring is grace enough. This May
Needs no winter in which to pray.

AND ANOTHER POET of modest excellence who has published little, late, but puts many more established reputations to shame, is Michael Rivière. Let any anthologist who seeks the good, whether or not it is *representative* or *significant*, go to his *Selected Poems*.[7] Here is "The Greek Chapel":

Can this, then, be the gate?
Through this small barn, or stable,
This flaked iconostasis,
Does "eternity" wait,—
With these wicks in the tray
To light one on one's way?

Hard, finally, to choose:
Life, or oblivion;
To get up, or sleep on.
Only a fool would lose
His last Good-night, and stand
Here with a light in his hand.

Grigson has done much to shape the taste by which poems of this kind and quality can be admired and cherished in a literary climate only too ready to stifle them.

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[5] *The Faber Book of Reflective Verse*. Edited by GEOFFREY GRIGSON. Faber and Faber, £3.95.
[6] *Poems 1950–1974*. By DUNSTAN THOMPSON. The Paradigm Press (Bungay, Suffolk), £10.50.
[7] *Selected Poems*. By MICHAEL RIVIÈRE. The Mandeville Press (2 Taylor's Hill, Hitchen, Herts.), £2.50.

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IT IS MUCH EASIER to dazzle, as Craig Raine has found out. He is a poet who is cunningly aware of his prodigal talent, and in his new collection, *Rich*,[8] he's continually stepping back and admiring his poems with a knowing delight in their fluency, their surfaces, the texture of their compulsive transformations. His talent, defined in the title poem, is for "transforming the world / like the eye in love", but these transformations are so often an end in themselves, and the eye can all too easily appear to be in love merely with its own seeing. The poems in *Rich* are full of types of the artist observing what he's done. In "Placebo"—part love-lyric, part aesthetic adventure—Raine announces:

> *Suddenly like Matisse*
>
> *In a three-piece suit*
> *and consultant's white coat,*
> *I take infinite pains*
> *to keep this model alive. . . .*

Here, on the one hand, is the colour, the energy, the brightness of the art (Matisse being one of the great colourists), but here too is the immaculate contriver, the dandy in his three-piece suit with a touch of the clinician about him. Raine's poise—his being the artist always *demonstrating* his skill—is one of the most striking things about him.

Like "Placebo", "A Free Translation" is another aptly titled poem. Raine is certainly free with his translation, where everything can become anything else *ad infinitum*. For him, poetry is not what gets lost in translation but what gets found in it. In this particular poem there's another type of the artist, or rather the *magician*. While doing the washing-up (the mundane becoming the marvellous for him even at the sink) he considers his fingers:

> *Rinsed and purified*
> *they flick off drops*
> *like a court magician*
>
> *whose stretching fingers*
> *seek to hypnotize*
> *the helpless house. . . .*

Again, what is striking is the cunning self-definition—those dapper, persuasive coups of imagery he keeps pulling off: "the pagoda/of dirty dinner plates", the dustbins' "coolie hats", etc. Raine is the court magician of a post-courtly world. Several of the poems delight in a boudoir eroticism, and Sir Walter Raleigh makes at least two separate appearances in the book; but one always comes back to this awareness of "hypnotizing the helpless house", of being the performer. Raine's domestic interiors become little theatres of effect where he's absolutely in command.

As the middle section of *Rich*, Raine has published an affectionate autobiographical study originally delivered as a lecture. In it he describes his father's genius for story-telling. "My father would gather me up and rub his bristly face against mine, saying 'Gnaggle, gnaggle, gnaggle'. Prodigal mimesis from which I've learned." He has learned it from James Joyce, too, and he's certainly the prodigally gifted son; but there are times when I find myself begging for the relief of a little parsimony.

BLAKE MORRISON HAS BEEN an assiduous apprentice, publiciser and critic of Seamus Heaney and Craig Raine, and there are moments in his first collection, *Dark Glasses*,[9] when he achieves an almost uncanny fusion of their mannerisms. Here he is addressing "A Child in Winter":

> *your home's the cradle*
> *of a snowy hillfort*
> *with pink turrets*
> *and underground spring.*
>
> *Daylight bores you: all night*
> *you otter in our bed until*
> *we wake to find you with us,*
> *hands folded like a saint. . . .*

More of Heaney there, perhaps (I like the infant otter already developed into a *verb*), while the opening of "Grange Boy" corrects the balance:

> *Horse-chestnuts thudded to the lawn each autumn.*
> *Their spiked husks were like medieval clubs,*

THE REIGN OF THE AYATOLLAHS
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SHAUL BAKHASH

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ISBN 1 85043 003 9 292 pages January, 1985 £13.95

Dr Bakhash is Visiting Professor at Princeton University and a well-known authority on the Middle East.

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[8] *Rich*. By CRAIG RAINE. Faber and Faber, £5.95, paper £2.95.
[9] *Dark Glasses*. By BLAKE MORRISON. Chatto & Windus, £3.95.

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Porcupines, unexploded shells. But if
You waited long enough they gave themselves up—
Brown pups, a cow opening its sad eye,
The shine of the dining-room table.

This poem, like others in the book's first section, is a low-key dramatic-monologue-cum-narrative fiction, and its speaker in recollecting the personal and social experiences that have led up to his uneasy acceptance of responsibility for the family estate introduces perspectives familiar from the poems in Douglas Dunn's *Barbarians*: "One morning they began without asking." There are touches, too, elsewhere, of Peter Porter—whom Morrison clearly admires—both in "Our Domestic Grace" ("Elected at last—guest musicians/At the garden party of the gods") and in the early-Audenesque satire of "Transfusion": "It is as we had always suspected:/ God exists. Our scientists detected . . .", etc.

I don't dwell on these echoes merely to suggest that Blake Morrison has not yet achieved a distinctive voice. In a way, he has, and it is a compendium of the *Zeitgeist*. He is an extremely intelligent writer who inhabits the house of contemporary art and knows every mark on the wall-paper, every knot and whorl of the stripped pine. Move outside, and the rinsed landscape of his title poem is representative: "This Norfolk skyline, vast and open-hearted,/ Levels with its questioners, or seems to,. . ./ There are footlights on the dipped horizon,/ As if the ones whose plot we are a part of/ Were on the brim of coming clear." Always on the brim.

THE PERSIANS AMONGST THE ENGLISH

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Sir Denis Wright, GCMG, is President of the British Institute of Persian Studies, Hon. Fellow of St Antony's College, Oxford, and a former British Ambassador to Iran.

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Morrison's is the current aesthetic of being "none the wiser", of defining the immanence of meaning in the ambivalent or withheld gesture: "something cries out to be resolved./ The pen moves off with its search parties." When a telephone rings, it is "*perhaps* for you" and sets up frissons of speculation. And by the end of the last section of Morrison's long poem "The Inquisitor" the whole point seems to be that we are still none the wiser:

There are no ends, though, and no answers, for this
Is secrecy, whose art is to withhold
The logic it is richer not to know.

This is what it is all about, a teasing obliquity, the International Plot as metaphor for the impossibility of *knowing*, sex as the ambiguous area where secrets are variously hoarded, shared and betrayed: a significant encounter somewhere in Europe, London or Norfolk with portentous clouds of History riding above, a hinterland of domestic and political intrigue. Reading "The Inquisitor" I was reminded of *The Ploughman's Lunch*, very much "a film of our times." *Dark Glasses* is a not unimpressive book of our times. But you can't see the eyes.

DESPITE HIS PREFERENCE for obliquities and narrative procedures similar to Morrison's, you can see Andrew Motion's eyes from time to time. They are intelligent, mellow, neo-Georgian, and circumspectly sad. By far the best poems in *Dangerous Play*,[10] a handsomely-produced selection of his work over the past ten years, are the poignantly direct ones of sections four and six, set either side of a prose account of his childhood. They are full of a gentle, generous, elegiac candour, whereas much else in the book seems *voulu*, despite Motion's ambition and his talent for orchestrating voices from the various social milieux about which he has read.

The title poem, for example, is an imaginative response to James Fox's marvellous sleuthing enquiry into the murder of Lord Errol, *White Mischief*. It's a kind of inside job, an inventive, slightly exploitative voyage into a rich world reconstructed by another writer. Motion's narratives are loaded with an air of complicity and the ghostly presences of secret sharers:

It's as if I were dreaming
And could not control what I saw. As if I might find
his face had been changed into one that I know,
or into my own, and could never be altered back
to a stranger's again. . . .

Mon semblable, mon frère—gazing back through a gauzy net of shifting images and snatches of dialogue which gently rises and falls against a beautifully painted backdrop of exile. I admire Motion's professionalism, accomplishment and high polish, but miss the "compelling drive" announced by his publisher.

---

[10] *Dangerous Play*. By ANDREW MOTION. Salamander Press, £8.95.

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With David Harsent's *Mister Punch*,[11] though, we're into compelling overdrive. This remorseless sequence of libidinous *grand-guignol* with its obscure hints of redemption is prefaced by Jung's statement that "the wounded wounder is the agent of healing" and no doubt exemplifies the double-edge of another of his remarks—that "the unconscious of man can reach God knows where." The loaded, controlled tension of Harsent's language is brought to bear on a series of violent cameos, inevitably reminiscent of Ted Hughes's *Crow*, in which his wounded puppet plies the stick and, indeed, a whole armoury of bestial psychic equipment on behalf of our shadow-selves.

It's a *tour de force*. Punch travels, lusts, acts out voyeuristic fantasies, falls to his devotions—"I held myself in contempt; Lady/I flogged myself with inventions"—and appears to end up uneasily at peace with himself inasmuch as we leave him with a "limp dick." Only a temporary malfunction, though, surely, since the whole point of Mister Punch is that he beats the devil, banging his way out of all constraints:

> *Punch, in the crowd with his stick,*
> *is rabble-rousing*
> *as ever. His claque are baying; their sharp*
> *snouts mark them out,*
> *their whisky smell. He whacks*
> *legs and grins invisibly.*

THE POEMS IN Florence Elon's first collection, *Self-Made*,[12] display a cautious, twice-bitten drive towards accuracy. Her ironies sit lightly on a deeper solemnity, just as, in her "Epithalamium for a Second Marriage", after pointing out that "I've heard this show before", she ends on a note of tentative affirmation: "What I feel/ is new and might last." Many of her poems concentrate on themes of family, European ancestry, and the making of an American self. They are often plain-spoken to the point of seeming rather characterless in their honest attempt to define personality.

> *I am the last one of my friends*
> *in order of "American":*
> *each born of people born elsewhere,*
> *grand or plain parents*
> *immigrating from foreign lands,*
> *Italian, Russian, French, German;*
> *mine were the last to come.*

To discover and celebrate their legacy is Florence Elon's main concern, and it would seem that she is learning all the time. When "In the New World" first appeared in an anthology eight years ago, her mother donned "fur caps, high boarskin boots,/ brocaded gowns of her Hamburg youth." Now, in the same poem, the same clothes recall a youth spent in Moscow. What's in a city? Or a fashion?

[11] *Mister Punch*. By DAVID HARSENT. Oxford University Press, £4.50.

[12] *Self-Made*. By FLORENCE ELON. Secker & Warburg, £5.95.

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AMERICAN CHRONICLE

Not Only an American Dream (& Nightmare)

Diane Ravitch's "Education"—By MAX BELOFF

I OWN TO A STRONG PREJUDICE against book titles that tell one nothing of their contents or are even misleading. Diane Ravitch has written an excellent book on a most important subject: the controversies over educational policy in the United States between the end of World War II and the advent of President Reagan.[1] Certainly the scene was a "troubled" one but it is impossible to discover a "crusade", if by crusade we mean a movement single-mindedly directed towards some ideal goal.

If there was a crusade at any time it was in the period covered in the book's opening chapter, "The Rise and Fall of Progressive Education", which deals with the period from the beginning of the century when the Progressive movement in politics generated an associated movement in the rapidly expanding school system, which survived its political progenitor but which was itself found inadequate to meet the nation's needs and gave way to a new accent on quality. What has been true of the most recent decades (as vividly illustrated by Professor Ravitch) is the absence of a single guiding principle or goal. Instead we have a series of pressures being exerted on educational institutions at all levels from a variety of quarters, justified by a variety of ideas from the genuinely reformist to the plain daft, often very hard to reconcile with one another and sometimes clearly contradictory. Furthermore, as so often in educational history, what appear to be moves in the right direction produce unintended, unforeseen, and undesirable consequences. I find it hard to believe that Professor Ravitch had in mind the fact that this at least was true of the original crusades, and that her title is intended to be ironical.

It is particularly important that this book should be read in Britain. Many of the problems faced by the United States—justice for the less able without detriment to the high-flyers; equality of access against equality of outcome; racial and cultural pluralism and how it should be handled in the schools; the growth of educational bureaucracies preaching at the schools at a safe removal from the chalk-face; the rise of union power—all these are common to both countries, and many of them common to all Western industrial societies. On the whole, the comparative dimension does not much interest Professor Ravitch, nor even the way in which ideas (and even passions) cross frontiers. She does indeed show how ideas on freer patterns in infant and preparatory schools, and on the "open plan" school, picked up in Leicestershire were translated over-enthusiastically into an American environment where they were not destined to flourish. But this is an exception. In dealing with the student disturbances at the time of the Viet Nam War, she does not enquire into the way in which American rancour against the University Establishment was carried across the Atlantic, partly by American students and partly by the media, to link up with another kind of radicalism springing from different social and political roots. But with so much richness, it is churlish perhaps to complain.

WHAT WILL THE BRITISH READER find to differentiate the American scene from the more familiar one at home? In the first place, there is in education (as in other fields of activity) the specifically optimistic and outgoing character that foreign observers have noted in Americans from Tocqueville's time onwards. A new idea is easier to put across—runs into less opposition, and has greater chances of making its way—than in Britain, though with this goes at times an inability to follow the thing through, and too many trails that seem to lead nowhere in particular.

In the second place, the Americans have not been bedevilled by education being closely involved with party politics. Of course the different blends of Democrats and Republicans have different attitudes on some educational matters, and on the financial provisions to be made; but there is nothing corresponding to the way in which, for the Labour Party, the comprehensive secondary school and the abolition of private educational provision have become articles of political faith. Incidentally (except at the University level), Professor Ravitch has very little to say about private education in the United States. Her only references are to where it has been used to circumvent racial integration—and even here the absence of statistics (a feature of the book) does not enable one to gauge its importance.

Thirdly, the degree of decentralisation in the system has

[1] *The Troubled Crusade: American Education 1945–1980.* By DIANE RAVITCH. Basic Books, $19.95, £14.95.

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given particular scope for action through the courts. And as in other fields, the courts have shown their limitations. *Brown v. Topeka* (1954) was no doubt a landmark in the struggle against racial discrimination. But when the courts have moved from declaring some practice unconstitutional to dealing with how the matter can be put right in a positive sense, they have shown their limitations as rule-makers. Remote from the schools—even more remote from the Universities, and with little understanding of the meaning or importance of academic freedom—the record of the courts should give pause to those who believe that Britain's affairs would be improved by greater latitude for judicial action.

Finally, there is (because of the scale of provision at the higher levels) much less evidence among those engaged in education of the persistent status-consciousness that makes it so hard for Britain to move forwards. There is nothing like the wish of "Redbrick" lecturers to be thought of as on a par with "Oxbridge" dons, of Polytechnic lecturers to be treated as though they were in Universities, of Colleges of Further Education trying to be Polytechnics—all of which gives an upward mobility of institutions to match a downward mobility of academic and educational achievement. In the United States, it would appear, institutions at all levels do attempt to do the best they can, within their limitations of finance and recruitment and in line with the needs of their communities and of the nation at large. At the University level, particularly where the great private Universities are concerned, the freedom to hire (if not to fire) does give greater scope to the very talented to make the best use of their talents . . . though it has for us the unfortunate by-product of contributing to the brain-drain.

In two respects, there is a marked similarity between the two countries despite the huge differences of circumstance. In matters like formal learning, academic standards, discipline in the schools, parents (who play a greater role in America's more decentralised system) show more common sense than teachers often do, and than educational theorists and administrators almost always do. It is not just *sputnik* and Japanese competition that has made it possible for little Johnny to be taught to read and count despite child-centred theories. It is also because parents have a shrewd idea as to what helps one to get a job, and what schools should do about it. The great weakness of contemporary American education, with its important international repercussions, is the neglect of modern languages (even worse than in Britain) and this, alas, is something about which many parents are unlikely to be as sensitive.

The other similarity is the strong obstacles placed in the way of resolving educational dilemmas through actual research. Because of the use to which pseudo-racial theories were put by the Nazis, research into the possibility of different mental endowments being perceptible in different ethnic or racial groups is something against which minds are firmly closed and into which the researcher ventures at peril. Yet, on the face of it, it would seem improbable that differences in physical endowments obvious to the naked eye should have nothing corresponding to them in the make-up or activity of the brain. There is, in America as in Britain, an almost equally strong taboo against serious monitoring of educational achievement in different types of school and in response to different styles of teaching. All the arguments for and against the "child-centred" school, freedom of choice of courses at the University, didactic methods as against programmed learning, go on in a vacuum. People take one side or another, or even change sides, not as a result of experience but of inner conviction. And the only research tolerated is that which confirms the views of those who commission it.

The main reason for hoping for a wide readership for Professor Ravitch's book is not, however, what it may teach us about ourselves. The United States is a rapidly changing society and our views on it are always likely to be a generation out of date. And while we might look to other aspects of life to measure the changes in European societies—the economy, industrial relations, patterns of consumption, the family—education is central for understanding the United States, and always has been. It was the school that was, and was intended to be, the major instrument for turning the children of immigrants into proper Americans. The need to follow lessons in English and later for many to go to college outweighed the desire to be able to converse with grandparents in their mother-tongue. Only the school made the "Melting-Pot" a tolerable image. To those of a liberal persuasion, there was only one obstacle to the realisation of this part of the American dream—the exclusion over much of the country of the descendants of the once slave Negro population from the benefits of an integrated educational system. "*Separate but equal*" would not suffice. The schools, like the Constitution, must become colour-blind. Even where residential patterns reinforced *de facto* segregation, the law must intervene to enforce it. Hence the long wrangle over "busing."

Yet within a generation of *Brown v. Topeka* it had become clear that the American Blacks were not satisfied with a colour-blind Constitution which was likely to leave them too often at the base of the social pyramid. They wanted parity of outcome, not parity of access. So, joined by other minorities—and even in the case of the alleged representatives of Women by a section of the population that was not a minority at all—they went another step beyond mere integration. They got, in fact, "affirmative action" (that is, quotas) in employment and in higher education, even where, as in respect of faculty appointments, it involved violating both the criteria of merit and the confidentiality properly surrounding University decisions on personnel. But where many of the Blacks were concerned affirmative action was not enough either; for this could only help the individual Black to overcome a poor start in life. What they now claimed was recognition as a group—the vogue of "Black Studies" was one temporary by-product. This new ethnocentricity had its repercussions outside the Black community—among Hispanic Americans, American Indians, the Rev. Jesse Jackson's "rainbow coalition"—and by reaction among former immigrant groups (Poles, Italians, Irish) for whom the Melting-Pot had hitherto seemed acceptable. The

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struggle in New York between the Black community's desire to control its own schools and the largely Jewish teaching profession may have helped to stimulate the growth of self-consciousness among American Jewry (whether in its religious-Orthodox or Zionist forms).

Another dimension was the too-little-observed move towards bilingualism in the schools, particularly in areas with a high concentration of Hispanic Americans and recent arrivals from Mexico. At first justified as a help towards the learning of English—another argument for which no research findings could be produced—the emphasis shifted towards another form of ethnocentricity. Perhaps Spanish could remain as the dominant linguistic experience. But if this is accepted then the whole "assimilationist" credo of traditional America is renounced. If the poverty and instability of Central America lead to the creation within the boundaries of the United States of a vast area in which the Spanish language and an Hispanic culture are dominant, can the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo be made to stick? Will the "Sunbelt" remain part of the United States?

Such speculations do not cross the tidy mind of Professor Ravitch, who is, it appears, still firmly anchored in the liberal American dream. But, as she herself shows, education, though a major factor in shaping society, is also at the mercy of deeper changes which it can neither much influence nor always foresee—the ups-and-downs in the demographic curve; changes in the age of marriage; changes in the pattern of employment; changes in the acceptable levels of taxation; competing claims on the public purse.

Despite the strict delineation of the subject matter, this is, all in all, the most interesting book on America that has come my way for a very long time.

Currencies

Justice was seen to be done in South
Africa yesterday, thanks to
  laudable Judge Irving Steyn
  sitting in Rand Supreme Court.

Mr Francisco Quintino, a
56-year-old white man,
  shot dead a very bad rogue
  (called Macks Lerutia, a black)

whom he saw stealing the milk money
(63 cents) from a doorstep
  in the suburban all-white
  neighbourhood where he resides.

Judge Irving Steyn cleared Francisco of
all the charges against him.
  Also, sagacious Judge Steyn
  said how Francisco "deserved

some sort of medal for what he had
done" and praised him for having
  selflessly acted—he said
  this was a real "Civic Deed."

Also, His Honour applauded the
"public service" which this Fran-
  cisco Quintino had done—
  curbed the unfortunate rash,

recently noted, of Milk Money
Thefts from decent white suburbs.
  (63 cents is about
  35 pence, English cash.)

Peter Reading

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LANGUAGE

Our Confused Political Vocabulary

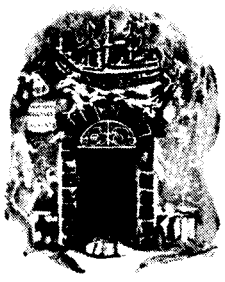
(1) Who is "conservative" in Poland?—By TIMOTHY GARTON ASH

"Fan Tchai asked Kung the master (viz Confucius) for instruction in farming. Said the Master: I know less than any old peasant. He made the same reply about gardening: An old gardener knows more than I do.

TSEU-LOU asked: If the Prince of Mei appointed you head of the government, to what wd. you first set your mind?

KUNG: To call people and things by their names, that is by the correct denominations, to see that the terminology was exact."

EZRA POUND, **Guide to Kulchur** *(1938)*



MANY TRAVELLERS to Poland, as to other countries in the "socialist" half of Europe, find there old-fashioned pleasures—the beauty of old towns, the quietness of cobbled streets, intense family life, chamber music, and good conversation—which they miss in the more "advanced" consumer societies of Western Europe. They find an "Old Europe."

This is the first, most obvious and paradoxical sense in which the Communist régimes of Eastern Europe, and particularly of Poland, have been conservative. Of course it was not the authorities' intention that after 40 years of socialism Polish farmers should still use horse-drawn ploughs. Until very recently, they deeply resented being praised by Western visitors for these "conservative" qualities, until, that is, they decided to exploit the advantages of backwardness—for tourism (although of course there are fewer tourists now). The very inefficiency of the centrally planned economy has made it, willy-nilly, an instrument of conservatism.

This involuntary—indeed positively undesired—conservatism of the Communist régime is not confined to the physical and material worlds. It is a real question whether the Polish Catholic Church would have such a massively loyal flock had it not been systematically persecuted by the Communist state. (In the free state of Poland between the two World Wars, the Church's position was, if anything, somewhat weakened.) But of course one cannot conclude that Polish Communists have been "conservative", any more than one could conclude from *Faust* that "*jener Kraft,/Die stets das Böse will und stets das Gute schafft*" was actually Christian. In using that political label, we must deal with *intentions*: goals, values, and programmes.

There are, then, three main candidates for the title of "conservative" in People's Poland: (*1*) the ruling Communist Party (formally the "Polish United Workers' Party", hereafter simply "the Party"); (*2*) the Polish Catholic Church; and (*3*) the political opposition. In the Western media, the label "conservative" has been promiscuously attached to all three.

(*1*) WITHIN THE PARTY, "conservatives" are those who resist all reforms of the existing post-Stalinist system, which they desire to preserve in substance exactly as it is. Not surprisingly, those most anxious to preserve the existing system unreformed are those who do best out of it—members of the *nomenklatura* and especially of the central *apparat*. They fear, rightly, that any change which would make the Party less unpopular or the Party-State more efficient would require some sacrifice of power or privilege on their part. They claim, with some justification, that the effective concentration of all political and economic power in the hands of the Centre is precisely what Levin envisaged—and thus defend class self-interest with ideological orthodoxy.

If to be conservative means to wish the conservation of the political *status quo*—and to distrust all change—then the great majority of Poland's Communist ruling class is "conservative." One may, to some extent, apply to it the Marxist analysis of Conservatism—understanding its "revolutionary" ideology as a cloak for class self-interest, just as a Marxist would interpret the writings of Edmund Burke or Michael Oakeshott as an ideological cloak for the self-interest of the capitalist ruling class.

However, this "revolutionary" ideology is a most unsatisfactory cloak for the Communist ruling class, as the Polish *nomenklatura* has found to its extreme discomfort in the years since the "Polish August" of 1980. There is some

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truth in the view that the *Solidarity* uprising consisted partly in a generation of young Poles judging (and finding wanting) their socialist rulers *by the standards which those rulers themselves preached*. It *is* difficult for the Party to defend the flagrant inequalities which characterise its system of rule (e.g. superior "private medicine" for the ***nomenklatura***) in the name of Equality. Like other Marxist régimes, the Polish régime has historically sought legitimacy by contrast with the "pre-revolutionary" past. But this kind of legitimation—always ineffective in a nation where "revolution" was imposed by the Russian occupiers—is by now totally ineffective. "Like before the War" is a term of the highest possible praise on the lips of Poles far too young to remember the pre-War period.

It is therefore not surprising that Polish Communists, like their comrades in the *DDR*, the East German "Democratic Republic", Hungary and Romania, have begun to seek legitimacy not by contrast with but by claiming *continuity from* the "pre-revolutionary" past.

This dubious enterprise was vigorously pursued by Edward Gierek, with the symbolic rebuilding of the Royal Castle in Warsaw and ever more frequent appeals to patriotism in the propaganda of his later years. It has been pursued even more vigorously by General Jaruzelski, who hardly mentioned the Party in his speech declaring the "state of war" on 13 December 1981, reinstated pre-War four-cornered caps for the Army which was just being used in the "self-invasion" of the nation, and has even gone so far as to authorise a memorial to the victims of Katyn in the Warsaw military cemetery. (The monument will apparently bear no date.)

Some observers have taken this rhetoric to indicate a genuine reversion to a more traditional kind of military dictatorship—"authoritarian" rather than "totalitarian"—and General Jaruzelski has been happy to cultivate the Pilsudski comparison for Western and Polish (but, of course, *not* for Soviet) consumption. Yet the dissolution of the Writers', Actors' and Journalists' Unions, and the campaign to remove crosses from schools and workplaces, are acts characteristic of a *would-be* "totalitarian" régime. What has happened is rather that the military and security arms of the politbureaucratic dictatorship (to use Rudolf Bahro's excellent label) have become relatively more prominent, and the Party-political arm temporarily less so—but the substantive character of the régime is unchanged. Naturally, Jaruzelski and his advisers wish to "reform" the economy—their political survival may well depend on it—but nothing they have done so far involves any significant devolution of political power.

Thus the nationalist conservatism of their rhetoric is, first, a propaganda tune for Western and Polish audiences, and, secondly, a cloak or code for the Polish Kádárism long advocated by Party reformers like Mieczyslaw F. Rakowski.

Letter to a Polish Friend in Warsaw

London

IT WAS GOOD OF YOU *to write to* ENCOUNTER *and congratulate the magazine on its recent anniversary—almost 400 monthly issues since we began our Anglo-American review in the autumn of 1953, some thousands of articles ago, millions of words. There have been many times during those decades when our existence has been precarious. Intellectual monthlies do not sell enough, do not earn enough, to pay their own way. They need—and in our own case, as one of the largest reviews of its kind in Europe, do get—individual benefactions and subventions from foundations. There have been hundreds of these contributions, and it is good that this is so. The variety of different supporters makes for the independence of our editors, without which there would be no point in offering a challenging interpretation of what is going on in the world: in literature and the arts, and above all in world affairs.*

Still, I would be less than candid with you if I did not confess to the despair that sometimes overcomes an Editor when he struggles to put together a budget by which his staff can be paid regularly, and his contributors get a decent fee for their poems, stories, or reviews. I remember one particularly black week-end ten years ago or so. One millionaire friend of ours had died. One generous American foundation decided to shift its philanthropy to medical and public health projects in Africa. The British trade unions negotiated a new contract for wage-increases which raised the costs of printing our magazine. Where could we find the extra thousand pounds we needed to carry on? Beg, borrow, or steal them? And what if Lloyds Bank was not sympathetic to our plea for a loan?

That weekend I was spending with our good friend and contributor Arthur Koestler. I was depressed, and he was not exactly the world's greatest cheerer-upper. Over his whisky, and my vodka, he upbraided me for my depression. "Think of it! Each month, each year, you write as you please and publish anything that you want! Any subject, any point of view! The only **real** *problem you have is with your Bank Manager. . . . And now, think of all our friends, our colleagues, writers and editors in Poland and Russia and Hungary. Your tiny worry is the Bank Manager; their gigantic confrontation is with the censor, the secret policeman, the snooping spy, the Party Commissar! . . ."*

IN THIS SPIRIT *I suppose we ought to admit that we had no real, serious or dangerous publishing problem. Occasionally a touchy politician threatens to sue for libel; and once in a while an apoplectic author feels insulted and wants to raise a rumpus. Nothing to lose a night's sleep over.* ***But there are political evils and cultural horrors*** *which, as in the famous Heine poem, can induce nightmares, "can break up the night." Koestler's vivid sense of the East-West difference, active in his mind to the very end (he was hopelessly ill, as you know, and died by his own hand two years ago), did not only serve to see one's minor Western troubles in perspective and proportion. It also helped to reinforce the sense of responsibility which we who live in freedom have, and must continue to have, to those friends and colleagues, writers and artists, editors and critics, who are forced to live under the most shameful, tyrannous restrictions.*

As an old reader of our magazine—and I have always been grateful that you were able, in one way or another, to translate our articles and get them published in part or (in happier **Solidarity** *days) in whole in some Polish reviews—you will remember that the issue of unfreedom in Eastern Europe was always a major concern of ours. Even before I edited* ENCOUNTER, *there was my journal* **Der Monat**, *then published in West Berlin, clearly taking sides against*

THIS LETTER, *in translation, was published in "***PULS: kwartalnik literacki***" (No. 20), a London-based Polish journal which circulates widely in "underground" circles in Poland.*

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The "revolutionary" Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism of the Party *apparat* is, by contrast, a familiar cloak for the conservatism of pure material self-interest. The combination of these two tendencies is not an administration which can be characterised as "conservative": it is confusion and half-measures.

(*2*) THE SECOND major political actor in Poland, the Church, is often and with more reason characterised as "conservative." In respect of, for example, sexual morality, the Polish Catholic Church obviously is conservative. Moreover, in ways which a larger proportion of Westerners would recognise as positive, the Church has conserved certain traditional values—honesty, fidelity, purity of language, knowledge of the true history of Poland—in itself and its teaching. This literally "conservative" achievement was explicitly recognised in the *Solidarity* programme, which demanded that these traditional values should be restored to their proper place in education and the media.

However, it would be wrong to imagine that the Polish Church has simply been hardened in its traditional postures by the experience of resistance to a Communist state. In fact, its own *social* teaching has changed and developed very significantly through the spiritual argument with socialist tenets. It is a Polish theologian (Father Józef Tischner) who places the concept of "exploitation" at the centre of his social thought;[1] and the Polish Pope who uses the Marxist concept of "alienation" in his encyclical *Redemptor Hominis*. Thus, on closer examination, the equation of Polish Catholicism and conservatism is also revealed as facile.

(*3*) MOST IMPORTANT for the future is the ideology of political Opposition in Poland, and, behind it, the political culture of the *Solidarity* and post-*Solidarity* generations. Too often in the past, those who resisted alien governments in Poland were so absorbed in the immediate struggle for freedom that they hardly paused to ask: what shall we do with this freedom when we have won it? "*Polska, tak, ale jaka?* (Poland, yes, but what sort of Poland?)"—in the famous challenge of a great 19th-century Polish historian. One of the most important, lasting achievements of the *Solidarity* revolution is that this question is now being widely asked and intensely discussed by a new generation of Poles.

Since the imposition of martial law in December 1981 very few (if any) of their answers have carried the label "socialism." When Warsaw University students were surveyed in 1978, just 19% of those questioned were definitely against the evolution

[1] See his *The Spirit of Solidarity* (Harper & Row, New York), 1984.

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the miserable apologists of totalitarian practices in East Berlin and East Germany—and what was the Ulbricht era of Stalinist communism but a continuation of the **gleichgeschaltete Kultur** *which the Allied victory in the War was supposed to have dissolved? Long before Solzhenitsyn we published accounts of the Gulag Archipelago (one indeed from the pen of a Pole, Jerzy Gliksman). In those early days, after the Berlin Blockade of 1948-49, we also published that most brilliant of the analyses of totalitarian mind-control—Czeslaw Milosz's essay on "Murti-Bing", and other pages from his memorable book,* **The Captive Mind**.

HOW MANY YEARS *have passed! But you and your friends must rest assured that our compassion for the plight of the unfree, and our devotion to your noble cause of human rights and cultural freedom, have not changed or diminished. You will have seen by now that we have been publishing the letters which that splendid fellow, Adam Michnik, sent out from his Warsaw prison. And in recent years we have published innumerable articles, large and small, from Leszek Kolakowski who has become one of our closest (and most influential) collaborators. I need hardly add a mention to you about the invaluable editorial contributions of—after all, you both went to the same Warsaw* **gymnasium**—*our advisory editor, the indefatigable scholar Leopold Labedz.*

We do have subscribers in some 103 countries, and occasionally a writer and reader drops into our London editorial office from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This is always touching and cheering for editors who have their noses buried too deep in manuscripts and galley proofs. But I hope the "Third World" will understand and forgive me if I confess that the deepest experiences of these last decades have been the contacts with friends in Eastern Europe: with visitors from Prague during the '68 Spring; with Petöfi Circle poets during the Hungarian thaw of '56; and, not least, you and your Polish literary friends—not only during the **Solidarity** *period, but as early as the* **Po Prostu** *outburst against the "Iron Curtain" in the 1950s, and even before that with the Katyn survivors like Josef Czapski.*

I DID NOT MEAN *to write you a topical editorial. Our perspectives must be the long ones of history. Here in England we have a free and unfettered intellectual life; and without it a democratic society could not exist. What undemocratic societies can do well is to mobilise young conscripts, equip huge armies with good and deadly weapons, and intimidate their neighbours in the name of peace and security. But a nation's economic programmes, which are only risky projections even in the best of circumstances, become doomed vehicles of corruption, waste, and poverty, when administered by managers who are politicians, party bosses who are privileged commissars, and ideologues who haven't had a new idea or revised an old one since they read their first little Marxist pamphlet a long time ago. Politics stagnates without the steady pressures of a free press with its critical analysis and frank comment. Culture degenerates when it becomes a mere formal adornment of a government seeking prestige, legitimacy, propaganda. It was Socrates who first suggested that the function of an intellectual was to be "a gadfly" (and that was thousands of years ago). It was John Milton, in* **Areopagitica**, *written and published (in 1644) not very far from where I sit and write now, who put in the historic call for an end to "licensed printing", and made possible the fine flowering not only of libertarian institutions in England but of a wondrous literature and poetry.*

IS THERE MUCH CONSOLATION *in repeating that art is long, even if life is short? Perhaps not, at least for you who have suffered so much in these years the indignities of stupid censors and mindless commissars. Still, there is some consolation in history, in the recognition that the struggle—our common cause—for intellectual liberty, for truth and against the organised lie, for the free mind, for the human right to speak and write freely as one pleases, is a long revolution, and indeed the only revolution worth defending and fighting for. Please, dear friend, accept my message that it is also an unconquerable cause.*

Melvin J. Lasky

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of the world in a direction similar to Polish-style socialism. In the 1983 survey, the figure was 64%. If "socialism" is something like the Jaruzelski régime, they say, then the devil take it. But very few of the answers bear the label "conservativism" either. For what does it mean to be "conservative" when you want to reform and transform, indeed to destroy, not to conserve, most of the political, social, economic and legal institutions of your country? The more "anti-socialist" or "right-wing" you are, the less you want to conserve. . . .

IN FACT OUR TRADITIONAL political labels, "Left", "Right" and "Centre", are quite anachronistic in Poland—a point often made in the Polish underground press. *Solidarity*'s own Programme combined elements from the socialist, liberal, and conservative traditions. Its demand for full employment, strong advocacy of an extensive welfare state, and implicit egalitarianism could all be traced to the socialist heritage. The political and legal institutions it envisaged for the "Self-Governing Republic" were drawn from the central stream of liberal democracy. Its cultural and educational goals were conservative—and even conservative-restorationist. *Solidarity* wanted the cultural goods and values which had been *conserved* in the private life of the family and the Church to be restored to their proper place in the public sphere. It was a conservative-socialist-liberal programme, and it sketched the outline of a Polish Republic which would have been unique in contemporary Europe.[2]

In the three years since that Programme was passed by *Solidarity*'s first (and only) national congress, a plethora of political declarations, manifestos, and programmes have been produced by diverse groupings and journals in Poland's extraordinarily vigorous unofficial counter-culture.[3] Indeed, one has the impression that there are as many programmes as *samizdat* journals. (For the purposes of this article I shall ignore the largest part of the underground debate, which is naturally concerned with the strategic question of *how* to work towards greater independence.) Moreover, as an author writing recently in the *samizdat* magazine *Replika* drily observed: "The majority of groups and movements do not err on the side of ideological and political cohesion. . . ."

The most clearly articulated tendency is probably that associated with some leading members of the former "Social Self-Defence Committee—KOR", and historically identified with the pre-War Polish Socialist Party (PPS). If one was forced to find a West European political label for this tendency, the closest approximation would be "social democratic"—but the approximation would not be very close. To the (for want of a better word) "Right" of it, there is a whole kaleidoscope of groups and cliques (all with at least one acronym) which may very broadly be described as liberal, national, or Christian democratic. Unlike the pre-War National Democrats, the great majority of them are neither racist nor nationalistic. They base their unequivocal demand for Polish independence on the universal right of all nations to self-determination—a right often reiterated by the Polish Pope. Most of them explicitly include the rights of their neighbours—the Germans on the one side, the Lithuanians and Ukrainians on the other—in this demand. Following the Pope's lead, their Polish patriotism is bedded in the vision of a liberated and reunited "Christian Europe."

Apart from the emphatically Catholic allegiance (which does not, however, lead most of them to want an Established Church), they differ from the "social democrats" in the lesser role which they would assign to the state in an independent Poland. There are still few who would advocate the "reprivatisation" of heavy industry—or, for that matter, of health care. But there is considerable (if mostly under-informed) interest in "free market economics." The works of F. A. Hayek have been issued by several unofficial publishing houses. One such *samizdat* publisher—*Oficyna Liberalów* (Liberals' House)—has decided to practise what it preaches. Whereas most *samizdat* publishers sell their books at only a little over production cost, Liberals' House apparently feels it has a duty to charge "free market" prices! Since demand for *samizdat* far exceeds supply, they should make a handsome profit.

SO HERE AND THERE in the kaleidoscope there is a fragment which we might identify as "conservative." However, no single Western political label—conservative, socialist, or liberal; Left, Right, or Centre—is adequate to describe any single programme in the Polish Opposition. In Poland, to adapt the great and wise Bishop Butler, "Everything is what it is and not another thing."

All this being said, one has yet to explain the common experience of conservatives from the West, who very often feel "at home" with Poland in a way that Western leftists do not. The unease of the Western Left may be understood by looking at what is called "socialism" in Poland. But why should a conservative feel "at home" in a Communist state? The answer is to be found, I think, by considering conservatism not as a theory or an ideology, but as a temperament, habit or disposition. With their profound attachment to family, church, and nation, with their deep sense of history and tradition, with their almost instinctual code of rights and duties, I believe that 95% of Poles are, in this sense, conservative. It is a conservatism the more intense because it cannot be extended to the state; nor, indeed, to any of those intermediate associations or institutions (the "little platoons" which Burke exhorted Englishmen to love), for these too are controlled by an alien régime. So Poland is a Communist state but a conservative country.

Its predatory neighbours, Germany and Russia, have produced and destroyed greater individual works of art; but the Poles are second to none in conserving and restoring. The Western visitor stands amazed by Warsaw Old Town, totally destroyed by the Nazis, now wholly rebuilt. What the Poles have conserved above all is their nation—as a riot of competing programmes, a fantastic piece of intellectual *origami*; as ideal, as myth, as historic community; the nation as a work of art.

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[2] See pp. 222 ff. of my *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity* (1983). See also Leszek Kolakowski, "How to be a Conservative-Liberal Socialist", ENCOUNTER, October 1978.

[3] See *Uncensored Poland*, News Bulletin No. 15, 1984. This invaluable publication can be obtained from the Information Centre for Polish Affairs, 115 Redston Road, London N8 7HG.

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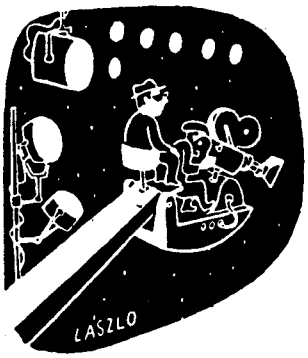
FILM

Fassbinder's Achievement

By Ronald Hayman



"IT IS BECOMING apparent", wrote Hermann Hesse in 1940, "that the so-called 'reality' of the technologists, the generals and the bank directors is growing constantly less real, less substantial, less probable." Because of Hitlerism and the War, reality and realism both present special problems to the contemporary German writer. Heinrich Böll and Günter Grass, riled by the amnesia that has so assiduously been cultivated in the Federal Republic, have been more forceful than other novelists in persuading their compatriots to look backwards; but they have not resurrected the recent past realistically. The German langauge had itself been debilitated and partially discredited by the politics it appeared to nurture; at the same time the procedures of reporting became suspect.

Even after the War such processes as "De-Nazification" depended largely on written reports. In his novel *Gruppenbild mit Dame* (1971) Böll subjects the conventions of the novel to ironic scrutiny: by his pernickety insistence on citing authorities for every "fact" adduced in the fiction he raises the question of how much information there is in a novel, and where it comes from. In both *Die Blechtrommel* (1959) and *Hundejahre* (1963) Günter Grass distils much of his narrative from the crude social history of Nazism; but his use of non-realistic narrative techniques highlights the absurdity of recent history. Reality is made to seem unreal, as it often does in the world outside the book.

For the film-maker the problem is not entirely different. Though the medium pushes both writer and director towards offering what appears to be an undistorted photographic account of human behaviour, realism is not obligatory. Reiner Werner Fassbinder said:

> "The realism which I believe in and which I want is that which occurs inside the mind of the spectator, and not that which appears on the screen. That doesn't interest me at all. People get that every day. If you show them what they experience in the same way as they experience it, they close up, in my opinion."

Here he is echoing an idea that was central to the work of a director who influenced him, Alexander Kluge. The cinema functions, according to Kluge, by bringing the audience's imagination into play:

> "Film has existed in people's minds for some tens of thousands of years—streams of association, daydreams, experience, sense impressions, awareness. The technical invention of film has merely added reproducible counterparts to this."

But if film is closer than literature to what goes on all the time in the mind, it does not follow that film is more potent than literature as an antidote to historical amnesia. Böll and Grass conjure up pictures by using the German language with precision and gusto, smashing clichés, challenging commonplace assumptions, subverting pious platitudes, exposing the hollowness of facile *Gemütlichkeit* and the ugly cracks in the veneer of conformism to the lifestyle subsidised by the post-war Economic Miracle. In this way they tried to show that there was no discontinuity between the past and the present. Fassbinder was equally alert to the violence that is latent in beery camaraderie, and he was no more tolerant of the xenophobia (the *Fremdenhass*) and the smug assumption of superiority still to be heard in intolerant small-talk. But working, as he habitually did, at enormous speed, he was liable to let himself be seduced by the visual charm of the medium.

BORN ON 31 MAY 1945 in Bad Wörishofen, he was the son of a Munich doctor who had his practice in the red-light district and gave prostitutes their medical check-ups. After his parents divorced in 1951, Rainer had a disturbed childhood; he was expelled from one school and ran away from several others. At the age of fifteen or sixteen he went to Cologne, where he lived for two or three years with his father, who had been struck off the medical register and was living by renting rooms to immigrant workers. His son did odd jobs for him, putting up wallpaper, decorating rooms and collecting rent. It had never seemed to Rainer that there was anything abnormal about prostitution, and he formed a partnership with a good-looking boy he met in one of the gay bars. Most of their clients were immigrant workers.

Returning to Munich, Fassbinder went on doing a variety of jobs while training, part-time, at a drama school. His mind was already made up: he wanted to direct films. His mother was living with a journalist, and the boy worked for a time in the library of a newspaper. He also took a course in photography, which was to stand him in good stead. When he applied for admission to a Berlin film school, he was rejected; but in 1965 he directed a ten-minute 16-millimetre film, after persuading a boyfriend to invest and star in it. They made a short 35-millimetre film together in 1966 before Fassbinder joined a fringe company called "Action Theater" in 1967. The plays were staged in a converted cinema, but in May 1968 the building was smashed up by a husband who was jealous of Fassbinder's relationship with his wife.

The actors went on, undeterred, to found a new company in July 1968. The "*antiteater*" was originally a cooperative, with some plays written collectively, some directed collectively;

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but Fassbinder had formidable energy, charm, determination, creativity and powers of leadership. He wrote plays, adapted others, played leading parts, directed inventively; he also seemed likely to make more films, giving parts to the other actors. The new film company was called *Antiteater-X-Film*, and Fassbinder's first full-length film, *Liebe ist kälter als der Tod*, was made very cheaply, shot during 24 days in April 1969. The second, an adaptation of Fassbinder's first play for the company, *Katzelmacher*, was a story about an immigrant worker. Shot in August 1969, even more quickly and cheaply than the April film, it won enough prize money to make it possible for him to go on working in films at the same headlong rate he had worked in the theatre. By the time he was 26, he had directed eleven full-length films, acted in eight films by other directors, written seven plays for the stage and two for radio—and all this while continuing to work in the theatre as actor and director.

In his early films there was relatively little danger that Fassbinder would let himself be overwhelmed by the seductive visuality of the camera. As in his productions for the theatre, he was basing his style on an aggressive anti-naturalism and a minimalism which was dictated partly by shortage of money and partly by the example of Jean-Marie Straub, who came to direct at the Action Theater. Straub's first two films, *Machorka-Muff* (1963) and *Nicht Versöhnt* (1965), had been based on stories by Heinrich Böll, and in all his 1960s films Straub relied heavily on a static camera and abnormally long takes. He had, as a purist, no desire to achieve commercial success.

Fassbinder was not a purist. Inside him the idealist could survive—not always comfortably—alongside the opportunist. In the theatre he paid lip-service to the democratic cooperative ideal of *Mitbestimmung* while autocratically imposing movements, gestures and timing on his actors. As a film-maker he changed his style and became less dependent on the group when it became feasible for him to work towards commercial success. Several of his early films were seen at the Berlin Film Festival, but none of the first eleven made much impact on the critics. The first to win enthusiastic reviews was *Der Händler der vier Jahreszeiten*, which was shot in eleven days during the winter of 1971. Gradually the influence of Straub was replaced by the influence of Douglas Sirk.

Sirk (whose original, Danish, name was Detlef Sierck) had been a Left-wing activist during his youth. Nevertheless, after establishing himself in the German theatre during the 1920s, he went on in the '30s to direct films for UFA. In 1937 he emigrated to America, where he had to weather five years as a Hollywood contract-writer before emerging in 1942 with the first of the many successful features he directed. On the surface they are conventional Hollywood glossies, but there are critical undercurrents and Fassbinder was attracted to these, as he was to the indications of a homosexual sensitivity and to Sirk's skill in revealing tensions within the "family structure." Three of Sirk's best films are *There's Always Tomorrow* (1955), *Written on the Wind* (1956), and *Imitation of Life* (1959). Fassbinder said that Sirk emancipated him from the fear of being vulgar and the belief that he had to keep his distance from Hollywood-style storytelling if he wanted to be serious. "Sirk made me realise that it's perfectly possible to tell stories in such a way that people would normally say they're not being told truthfully."

The word "melodramatic" is often used about Fassbinder's plotting, though it's not altogether appropriate. In the films which are aimed at a mass audience, he tries for a thrillerish suspense and for sure-fire climaxes; but there are no heroes in his films, or heroines, and with a few exceptions (such as the evil doctor in *Die Sehnsucht der Veronika Voss*) no villains. He was an excellent cinematic narrator, and his 1981 film *Lola* (a reworking of Heinrich Mann's 1905 novel *Professor Unrat* by the scriptwriters Peter Merthesheimer and Pea Fröhlich) is considerably less melodramatic than Josef von Sternberg's 1930 film *Der blaue Engel*, which derives, more directly, from the same material. The performances given in Fassbinder's film by Barbara Sukowa and Armin Müller-Stahl are less memorable than those given by Marlene Dietrich and Emil Jannings (and there is no tune to compare with *Falling in Love Again*). But Fassbinder's treatment of the sexual relationship is unsentimental; and quite a subtle point is made in drawing a parallel between the vain, authoritarian, Wilhelmine schoolmaster and the modern Building Commissioner, a meticulous, well-meaning man who tries to fight honourably against municipal corruption.

TWO-AND-A-HALF YEARS AFTER Fassbinder's death in June 1982, it's scarcely any easier to evaluate his achievement than it was at the end of his short life. Some critics have acclaimed his 15-hour television adaptation of Alfred Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1979-80)—due to be screened in Britain in 1985 by Channel 4—as his finest work. Other critics make the same claim for *Fontanes Effi Briest* (1972-74), for *Die bittere Tränen der Petra von Kant*, (1972), for *Angst essen Seele auf* (1973), for *Der Händler der vier Jahreszeiten*, for *Die Ehe der Maria Braun* (1978). There are even those who champion *In einem Jahr mit 13 Monden* (1978), *Satansbraten* (1975-76) and *Warnung vor einer heiligen Nutte* (1970).

What is even more disconcerting than the amazing quantity of his films is the dissimilarities among the best of them. Except in the 111-minute epilogue, which Fassbinder calls his dream of *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, his adaptation of the novel is surprisingly naturalistic, with narrative that is more straightforward than Döblin's. The behaviour of the individuals in the novel is inextricable from collective life in the slum of the city; but in the film personal relations are dragged firmly into the foreground. Nevertheless, it is one of the most impressive television adaptations that have ever been made of a novel; and *Fontanes Effi Briest* is one of the best adaptations for the cinema, shot stylishly in black-and-white. The mention of the novelist's name in the German title of the film is indicative of Fassbinder's respect and self-restraint.

Die bittere Tränen der Petra von Kant was a play before it was a film, and the screenplay scarcely differs from the original script. The action stays inside the opulent flat of the successful dress-designer. The cast consists of just five women; the action moves slowly, claustrophobically, effectively towards a climax of hysteria. *Angst essen Seele auf* is the most intensely human, the most warmly compassionate of his films: he empathises

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lovingly with the shy, unglamorous, fiftyish charwoman and the gauche, lonely, inarticulate black immigrant, while tellingly exposing the narrow-mindedness and nastiness of the relations and gossipy neighbours who act as if the couple were not entitled to have a sexual relationship or to get married. The English title, *Fear Eats the Soul*, misses the point of the original title, which mimics the pidgin-German of the African—*Fear Eat Soul Up. Der Händler der vier Jahreszeiten* is based on an incident that occurred in Fassbinder's family when he was ten or eleven. His twelfth full-length film was shot in eleven days during the summer of 1971; the rave reviews it received from German film critics enabled it to reach a wider audience than had seen any of the first eleven films. The emotions and the tensions are as straightforward and commonplace as in any Hollywood tearjerker, but this is an unsentimental movie which struck an unfamiliar note with its realistic picture of unexceptional people in provincial Germany.

Die Ehe der Maria Braun and *Die Sehnsucht der Veronika Voss* are more ambitious in every way. These two movies and *Lola* are the only three he made of the cycle he planned under the ironic title "Entire History of the German Federal Republic." The point of featuring the football match at the end of *Maria Braun* is that Germany is winning the World Championship for the first time since the War—a victory which coincided, for Fassbinder, with the end of an epoch in German history in which women had been dominant. Like Wilkie, the singer, in *Lili Marleen*, Maria achieves a high degree of independence while concentrating on her own career. She even keeps the upper hand in her sexual relationship with her boss, but according to Fassbinder, "Love is the best, most insidious, most effective instrument of social repression", and Maria loves her husband. While he is in jail, she is free, and her freedom continues while he is in Canada. But when her boss dies, she finds that she has been outmanoeuvred by the males: her husband had been bribed to stay away for the rest of her boss's life. In *Veronika Voss* Fassbinder's indictment of contemporary German society hinges on the corruption of the official in charge of narcotics investigations. The drug-pushers are emblematically dependent on American suppliers, while the journalist—the representative of liberal humanism—cannot bring the murderous doctor to justice. Like *Fontanes Effi Briest*, the film is shot in black-and-white (several sequences parody the style of the old UFA films in which Sybille Schmitz—Fassbinder's model for Veronika Voss—established herself).

Querelle and *In einem Jahr mit 13 Monden* are the two films in which Fassbinder deals more explicitly with homosexuality. Jean Genet's novel *Querelle de Brest* is about a man who in order to become identical with himself becomes a murderer; *In einem Jahr* is about a man who has become a woman. Believing that "Filmic concern with a literary work should not set itself the task of giving the maximum realisation to the pictures which literature brings into existence for the reader", Fassbinder gives an astonishing proportion of the dialogue in *Querelle* to the narrator, who has more to say than any of the characters. This slows the tempo and reduces their apparent freedom of action; it does not reinstate Genet's control over the way in which the violence is introduced.

In einem Jahr contains one of Fassbinder's fiercest assaults on the audience, and also the most complex of his counterpoint. In the slaughterhouse sequence the camera rolls mercilessly over helpless, terrified, immobilised beasts as they have their throats cut by impassive butchers, while the transsexual talks about an actor—the lover she has just lost—petulantly mimicking old-fashioned theatrical rhetoric. The monologue we hear is from Goethe's *Torquato Tasso*.

The undertone of *Satansbraten* is no less savage, but the tone is comic, and the style is reminiscent of Joe Orton. Fassbinder takes an equally malicious delight in making all the permutations of human interaction look absurd and undignified, while random acts of violence are perpetrated. What most noticeably differentiates the script from one that Orton might have written is the pace of Fassbinder's inventiveness, which moves the action rapidly on from one situation to another.

DESPITE THE HETEROGENEITY of these ten films, they have common multiples. Nothing preoccupied Fassbinder more deeply than the *Angst* that ensues from loneliness; and he knew from experience that success is no protection from the sense of failure. Petra von Kant, the charwoman, the immigrant worker, the merchant of the four seasons, Maria Braun, Veronika Voss and Querelle are all victims and, as Fassbinder states the case, victims of a "rotten society" in which love cannot last. In some films he shows how inimical family life and education are to freedom; in others he merely shows the consequences of our inability to be free. His own loneliness and his sado-masochism enabled him to identify with both victimisers and victims. Fascinated by the mechanics of oppression, he could go on endlessly finding parallels between public and private authoritarianism. There is more variety in his style than in his subject-matter; but all his films benefit from his experience of directing actors in the theatre, from his training as a photographer, from his ability to dramatise sexual tension and his eagerness to portray it frankly.

Though he was averse to textual improvisation, he liked to improvise camera angles, and his visual flair often led to compositions of great beauty within the frame. On the other hand, many of the weaknesses in his films derive from the speed at which he habitually worked. Though he was ruthless in

Controversy

Bonn

Controversy has broken out in Frankfurt over the dismissal without notice of the Director of the Opera House for planning to stage a play by the late Rainer Werner Fassbinder which has been widely condemned as antisemitic.

Herr Ulrich Schwab has accused the city of censorship in ***suppressing a production of the play "Trash, City and Death"****, written in 1975 but never performed. It deals with a lewd, rich Jewish speculator who exploits the poor in a big city, and has evoked sharp protests from Frankfurt's Jewish community.*

Herr Walter Wallmann (the Christian Democratic Mayor) and Social Democrats said the play would encourage neo-Nazis.

Michael Binyon
in THE TIMES (*London*)

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denying himself respite, he worked self-indulgently, without discipline and without commitment to bringing each work of art to the full realisation of its potential. He delegated all he could of the work that bored him; and his threshold of boredom was extremely low. During the so-called pre-preparation, he did not even make himself available for consultation and, refusing to inspect locations, he would arrive on the first day of shooting, expecting everything to be ready.

UNCONCERNED WITH posterity, he said that his films could be thrown away after use. Nor was he concerned about making his points clear to the audience. *Die bittere Tränen der Petra von Kant* ends with a sequence in which Marlene, the slave-like personal assistant, packs her suitcase, rejecting the better deal that Petra is offering her. Fassbinder's point (as he explained to one interviewer) is that Marlene, afraid of freedom, is heading for another slave-existence somewhere else; but the point fails to emerge clearly in the cinema. In *Querelle,* audiences are liable to be confused by the use of one actor (Hanno Pöschl) in the two roles of the brother, Robert, and the young murderer, Gil. Fassbinder's point is that Querelle is transferring the love-hate he feels towards his brother to another beautiful young man, whom he kills. And at the end of *Die Ehe der Maria Braun* audiences are confused by the ambiguity surrounding the final explosion. (Did Maria leave the gas on deliberately?) Here Fassbinder was diverted from his original intention by an argument with the actress Hanna Schygulla; she maintained that Maria would not have killed herself.

There are other flaws in the films—inconsistencies, anachronisms, a disturbing failure to synchronise the movement of the actors' lips with the speech on the sound-track. Many of his actors were untrained, and in the dubbing studio he was more concerned to have things done quickly than to have them done well. But it is pointless to discuss whether he was right or wrong to work in the way he did. He was incapable of working in any other way, and within thirteen years of professional film-making (1969–82) he achieved more than any other post-War German director.

He died on 10 June 1982, ten days after his 37th birthday. He did not (as many people believe) kill himself, except in so far as his whole way of living and working was suicidal. Besides working too hard, sleeping too little and smoking too much, he consumed exorbitant quantities of food, drink, cocaine, stimulants and tranquillisers. The showy outrageousness of his life-style may have been partly calculated to provide fodder for the gossips and journalists who were inadvertently helping him by contributing to "the Fassbinder legend"; but at the same time he was probably punishing himself. Desperately though he wanted fame, money, and success, he despised himself for wanting them and despised the people who were so readily deceived by the act he put on. His public persona was largely a fabrication, though the sado-masochism behind it was genuine enough. The legend forms a perspective in which we view the films, but the sado-masochism filters into them. One reason for the resonance they have is a certain correspondence between his private problems and the public quandaries of the exhibitionistic intelligentsia of post-War Germany.

Visiting Hours

Daughters you used to dress,
whose skinny legs you pushed
to walk along Orchard Street
& bitten nails you forced
to grow, whose meat
you bought & hides you tanned
sit on your bed, cramping your feet.

Dressed up in furs like the minks
you used to skin,
& underneath, in tailored suits,
they hand you daisies, stems clipped short.
Their hands wear polished, sharpened nails.

Smiling at your yellowing gown,
the brown spot on your nail that won't
grow out in time, those mumbled prayers
they can no longer say, their mouths
whose wails you used to kiss away
have forgotten how to speak.

Florence Elon

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The Pattern of Political Takeovers

How Eastern Europe Fell—By GEORGE SCHÖPFLIN

ONE OF THE MOST enduring and most influential interpretations of the way in which monopoly power was seized by Communist parties in Eastern Europe after the final stages of the Second World War is to be found in Hugh Seton-Watson's "three-phase model."[1] I want to argue that the full significance of this model emerges only when it is placed in a longer time-span and, therefore, that Stalin's successful takeovers should be seen has having, in fact, occurred in four phases.

Seton-Watson's three phases are genuine coalition, bogus coalition, and monolithic unity. In the first phase, a number of centre and left-wing political parties compete for power with the Communists, albeit under certain restrictions, notably the propinquity of the Soviet Union and the control of the Ministry of Interior by the Communists. During the second stage, non-Communist parties are still found in the government, but these are the creatures of the Communists; opposition is tolerated less and less. The final stage is one where the political system has been centralised entirely under the Communist party, and non-Communist forces have disappeared.

This model of interpretation is persuasive and cogent for a number of reasons. It clarifies and provides a sense of order to a complex series of events in a number of states; it allows comparisons to be made as to the speed and facility of the takeover in different countries; and it usefully emphasises developments within East European countries rather than the international situation. As far as the last is concerned, the role of the Soviet Union is, of course, accorded its due weight in the takeovers. None the less it is misleading to regard the seizure of power in Eastern Europe by Communist parties as having been solely the result of Soviet action. On the contrary, there were important domestic forces which constituted a *conditio sine qua non* for their success. It is on this factor that I want to focus with particular emphasis. This is *not* to ignore the importance of Great-Power diplomacy and the consequences of the Soviet presence in Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, one of the assumptions on which my argument is based is that both international and, equally, domestic forces played a crucial role in the process.

The question that arises is: why did the Communists encounter relatively limited opposition in their takeover? The traditional answer—fear of the Soviet Union and the use of local terror—is not wholly satisfactory. In particular, it does not fully explain the collapse of the non-Communist opposition in Czechoslovakia, where there was no Soviet military presence and where the non-Communists retained extensive popular support and the room to deploy it. The problem with this approach to the situation in Eastern Europe at the end of the War is that it tends to leave out of the calculation the results of the impact of the War itself and, somehow, tacitly assumes that the Communists possessed almost superhuman qualities of prescience. The thrust of my argument is that the Communist takeover can only be appreciated fully in the context of the previous history of Eastern Europe. This includes factors like the strength and weakness of democratic traditions, the existence (or otherwise) of civil society, the acceptance or rejection of authoritarianism, and the effects of war itself. In other words, rather than answer the question of why the Communists were successful in effecting takeovers, I will also attempt to look at why the non-Communists proved so weak in resisting this.

The politico-cultural arguments can do no more than establish the framework within which the events of 1944–48 were played out. None the less, these are of moment and should not be overlooked in the quest for a satisfactory answer to the question I have raised. It is common ground that the inter-War political systems of Eastern Europe suffered from a number of structural weaknesses, notably the inability of any East European state to sustain a fully effective democracy, with parliamentary sovereignty. Equally, no state was capable of establishing a properly integrated civil society, whether in terms of class or of nationhood, so that throughout the area there were important segments of society not committed to the state and ready to take action against it (or, at least, not to resist its destruction when the opportunity offered). This proved to be the greatest failure of what was otherwise a clearly pluralistic

[1] Hugh Seton-Watson, *The East European Revolution* (Methuen, 1956), pp.167ff. (As we go to press, we learn of Professor Seton-Watson's tragic death, at the age of 68, in a Washington hospital.)

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state, able to guarantee numerous political rights to the population—Czechoslovakia.

The non-Czechs never had the same commitment to the institutions of inter-war Czechoslovakia that the Czechs themselves had. Perhaps the most significant consequence of the emergence of authoritarian systems in the 1930s was that political experience was largely the preserve of the élite. The bulk of the population had little or no sense of participation in the political process—elections were, of course, manipulated—and their leaders, easily divorced from their supporters, fell prey to cooptation or corruption, even while the managers of the government parties successfully held on to the levers of real power. The use of arbitrary power and the absence of law simply represented other facets of the same phenomenon and had similar results—the habituation of the bulk of the population to arbitrary, semi-legal action by the government and the acceptance of this as normal.

The other side of the coin was the comparative weakness, albeit not complete absence, of competing elements of power. These did exist, whether in the presence of Social Democratic parties or Peasant parties, or the survival of a fairly vigorous press or trade unions, or other autonomous social organisations. Their survival was, on the whole, precarious but not hopeless. The power élites in the main sought only hegemonial and not monopolistic powers, and then were prepared to live with what were regarded as manageable competing power-centres. In the longer-term perspective, however, this weakness of social autonomy resulted in the emergence of correspondingly limited commitment to democracy and to the ground rules of competitive politics. Equally relevant was the comparative inexperience of the non-Communist political forces which emerged after the War. They had, by and large, survived on the periphery of politics; they had no direct understanding of the subtleties of handling political power. Indeed, some of them were not unaffected by peasant-populist distaste for "the political game", which they associated with the corruption of the élite.

The Communists, by contrast, had undergone a different schooling. After their failure in the brief period of mass politics (1917–23), which the Communists had hopelessly misunderstood, the parties underwent Sovietisation and were steeled in illegality to regard conspiratorial methods as the norm. All these factors, together with the transcendental imperatives of their own rightness derived from Marxism-Leninism, predisposed the Communists to treat opponents as enemies, to despise bargaining, and to press for their objectives—power—with the maximum ruthlessness. This was not, of course, sufficient for them to achieve anything beyond mere survival in the inter-war period. The old élites were more than a match for Communist tactics. But the War was to change all that.

THE WAR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES constituted the fourth phase (or more properly in chronological terms, the first phase) of the takeover. The gist of my argument is that during the War the old élites were largely destroyed. The population was radicalised by the upheavals attendant on wartime dislocation, with the result that at the end of the War Eastern Europe was the scene of a power vacuum which the Communists, the best organised and politically most purposive force, rapidly filled. In essence, therefore, Eastern Europe can be said to have undergone a kind of revolution during the War, a revolution which is understood here to mean the destruction of the old élite, indeed the entire *ancien régime*. This constituted the fundamental pre-condition for Communist takeovers. Effectively the Communist revolution was made possible by Nazi Germany and its wartime ideological allies, like the Arrow Cross in Hungary, Ljotić in Serbia, and the Iron Guard in Romania. The only modification that needs to be made to this general pattern is Bulgaria, where, as will be seen, the situation was more complex and the roots of weakness went further back in time.

The other factor I have mentioned as conducive to sympathy for radical change was the impact of war on the population. Just as the First World War had contributed to new expectations and, in turn, to the brief period of mass politics in Eastern Europe (including Béla Kun's short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic), so too did the Second World War result in popular pressure for a radical, far-reaching reordering and redistribution of power. Most obviously, there was pressure for land reform. But, over and above that, there was widespread dissatisfaction with the injustices of the *ancien régime* and a corresponding propensity to respond positively to ultra-radical alternatives. This placed the Communists in a strong potential position. They were in no sense identified with the old régime, indeed they could claim to represent its antithesis; they exuded purposiveness and certainty; and to some extent they were the beneficiaries of being allies of the Soviet liberator, which had swept away the old establishments. Hence, in the absence of strong competitors, the Stalinists were well ahead of the field in being able to mobilise support.

APPLYING THIS GENERAL MODEL to particular East European states, the following propositions emerge.

In the case of *Poland,* the model appears to apply fully. The old order and the political structures which had been established after the reconstitution of the state were completely destroyed by the Nazi and Soviet occupations. The physical disappearance of the members of the old élite was almost unparalleled in Eastern Europe. Over one-third of the intelligentsia perished, and 20 out of every 1,000 of the population died as a result of the War. Of the 1.2 million inhabitants of Warsaw, 800,000 were killed in the fighting of 1939 and the uprisings of 1943 and 1944. The determination of both occupying powers in 1939 to eliminate organised Polish life largely ensured that the Poland that was to be re-established after the end of the War would be a very different kind of state. The War represented a major caesura, and continuity was broken. The Warsaw Rising and the fighting against the Home Army (AK) took care of the wartime *ad hoc* structures that had been set up underground. In 1944-45 Poland was as close to a *tabula rasa* as it was possible to envisage. This was further accentuated by the massive demographic shifts caused by the effects of the War and the new territorial dispensation. The population of Warsaw was overwhelmingly new, thereby disrupting the continuity of personal links and contacts in the

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capital. Something like a third of the population of post-War Poland had been involved in the demographic shift.

The old political parties and groups that had controlled Poland before the War had disappeared, and the very high level of readiness to use force against its competitors by the Communist Party prevented the re-emergence of those associated with the London government. Most crucially, the parties of the Centre and Left that were re-established were unable to build up the structures and the self-confidence necessary to resist the penetration pursued by the Communists. For all his efforts, Mikolajczyk failed to transform the Peasant Party into a serious competitor, and the Social Democrats were hampered by internal divisions. Over and above these factors, of course, active Soviet intervention frequently helped to swing matters in the direction favoured by Marxism-Leninism.[2]

THE CASE OF *Czechoslovakia* demands a somewhat longer time-perspective. The *ancien régime* enjoyed considerable popularity among the Czechs—though less so among the non-Czechs—in the inter-War period, but its collapse at Munich in 1938 left the Czech élite largely demoralised. The wartime years saw fierce repression of the Czech upper and middle classes; some 38,000 of them perished at the hands of the Nazi occupiers. In Bohemia-Moravia much of the middle and lower levels of the administration remained in place, but the constant pressure to decide on what was the necessary minimum of collaboration with the occupiers to permit survival undoubtedly helped to accelerate the process of demoralisation. Six years of this helped to lower the Czechs' readiness to resist, and the post-1945 period did nothing to restore morale.[3]

The return of the government-in-exile, therefore, did not encounter a complete vacuum as in Poland; however, the discontinuity between the pre-1938 and the post-1945 situation was greater than appeared at the time. The popular mood reflected this. An opinion survey taken in December 1946 showed that only 8% of respondents considered the First Republic to have been one of "the most glorious periods of Czech history."[4] The political activity that resumed after 1945 was in the hands of politicians who, if not discredited, lacked any clear purposiveness and perspectives of their own. They could not cope with the ballast of Munich and of six years of Nazi occupation, and they were unable to develop any clear alternative to the Communists, except opposition virtually for its own sake. They seemed prepared to tolerate a degree of authoritarian-étatist control over society and to limit political competition. In the case of President Benes himself, this was all the more acute—he had completely lost his faith in the West after Munich and sought to rely on Stalin for the survival of what nowadays would be called a "Finlandised" status.

IF CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S discontinuity was long-drawn-out and slow, the collapse in *Hungary* was sharp and sudden. The highly cohesive and confident élite, which had successfully reconstructed the political system in the 1920s after the first Communist takeover, had retained control well into the Second World War. It had fought off challenges from the radical Right and had pursued a policy of semi-neutrality under the premiership of Kállai. This was abruptly ended with the *de facto* occupation of the country by the Germans in March 1944, which constituted the first blow against the neo-*K.u.K.* system in Hungary.

A number of politicians were arrested or went into hiding, and after the arrival of Adolf Eichmann, the liquidation of Jews—in most respects they were perceived as an integral part of the political community—proceeded apace. The second stage of the collapse was even more direct—on 15 October, the Regent was removed from office and the Arrow Cross took over. Disintegration followed. The administrative machine fell apart, and this was only accelerated by the impact of the War itself, which began to affect the territory of Trianon Hungary by the autumn of that year. The siege of Budapest and the fighting that continued until 4 April 1945 completed this process. The old élite was demoralised, dispersed, and largely expelled from the political arena. A political vacuum was created as a result.

Thus at the end of 1944, it was clear enough that an era had ended in Hungary and that something new in the political realm would have to be constructed. The Communists moved into the vacuum quickly and with determination; their opponents were much more hesitant. Indeed, they were initially so reluctant to take part in politics at all that a good deal of the pump-priming was the work of the Communists.[5] There is considerable evidence that in many localities the launching of *non*-Communist organisations had begun at the behest of the Communists. Not only was the revival of the non-Communist parties slow and hesitant but the Left-of-centre also suffered from the loss of many of their most able leaders who had perished during the previous year. In all, the caesura experienced by Hungary was very far-reaching and affected virtually all political groups.

THE PATTERN WAS again somewhat different in *Romania*, but not so significantly as to invalidate it completely. The discontinuity of Romanian politics dated not so much from the War as from the break represented by the Iron Guard and the rule of Antonescu. In the 1920s and 1930s, the traditional élites showed themselves less and less capable of running Romania, until eventually King Carol lost patience

[2] Jan Szczepański, *Polish Society* (1970), p.34; Susanne Lotarski, "The Communist Takeover in Poland", in Thomas Hammond (ed.), *The Anatomy of Communist Takeovers* (Yale University Press, 1971), pp. 339–367. The figures for the population of Warsaw are from Szczepański; they are supported by Joanna K. M. Hanson, *The Civilian Population and the Warsaw Uprising of 1944* (Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 8–9, 202; demography is discussed in Eugene M. Kulischer, *Europe on the Move: War and Population Changes 1917–1947* (Columbia University Press, 1948), chaps 8–10.

[3] Gotthold Rhode, "The Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia 1939–1945", in Mamatey and Luza (eds), *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic 1918–1948* (Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 296–321.

[4] *What's Your Opinion? A Year's Survey of Public Opinion in Czechoslovakia* (Prague, 1947).

[5] See, for example, Zoltán Vas, *Hazatérés 1944* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1970).

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and installed himself as royal dictator in 1938. This represented the first break in the traditional pattern.

Two years later, Carol was forced to abdicate over the massive loss of territory in 1940 and Antonescu ruled jointly with the Iron Guard for about four months. In January 1941, Antonescu suppressed the Guard and installed a military dictatorship, which pursued hostilities actively against the Soviet Union. The turn of the tide and the entry of the Red Army into Romania in 1944 prompted Carol's successor, King Michael, to oust Antonescu and to sue for armistice. In terms of stability and continuity, this course of events had been near disastrous for the non-Communists. They were perhaps more closely associated with the failures of the inter-War period than their counterparts in Poland or Hungary. They were weakened and disorientated by the events themselves (some of them had perished in the upheavals) and they were in no way prepared intellectually to pursue politics in the entirely new situation.[6]

Even so, given the extraordinary weakness of the Communist Party, the hiatus was barely sufficient for a successful Marxist-Leninist takeover. This appears to be the explanation for the very determined Soviet drive to establish control as early as possible in Romania, achieved for all practical purposes before the end of hostilities in Europe. This domestic weakness also helps to explain the remarkable readiness of the Soviet Union to permit the Romanian armed forces to take an active part in the fighting against Nazi Germany. This move ensured the absence of the army from the territory of Romania at a time when political events were being decided.

In the case of *Bulgaria*, too, the discontinuity arose well before the conclusion of the War, albeit hostilities accentuated it.

The first such break occurred in 1931, when a Democratic and Radical Party victory over the Democratic Concord, the government party, ushered in a period of high hope for reform and associated the political representatives of the bulk of the population, the peasantry, with the exercise of political power for the first time since the elimination of Stamboliski eight years earlier. These hopes were quickly dashed. The Democratic-Radical government of Nikola Mushanov was incapable of effecting any meaningful reform, something which was only partly attributable to the atrocious economic conditions then prevailing. The Peasant leaders in office proved to be corrupt and were quickly detached from their voters. Three years later, a military-technocratic *coup* removed this government from office, but proved equally ineffective.

Eight months after that, on 22 January 1935, Czar Boris mounted a *coup* himself and embarked on a thoroughgoing restructuring of Bulgaria. Political parties were banned, the administration was reorganised, the bureaucracy was purged, freedom of the press was suppressed, and independent trade unions were abolished. Boris died in 1943 and was succeeded by a Regency that had similar authoritarian pretensions, but lacked his energy and drive. The upshot of all this upheaval was a weakening of the Bulgarian élite, but without the emergence of corresponding forces to replace those pushed to the sidelines by Boris.[7]

The democratic Centre and Left were discredited by the brief experiment of the mid-1930s, and the military technocrats of the Velchev and Georgiev coup in 1934 were characterised more by political naivety than skill. In the event, once the South-east European front turned in Romania, the Bulgarian centre virtually ceded power to the Left without a struggle. The Communists, who in any case enjoyed considerably more popular support than in Romania, say, pursued the goal of monopoly power relentlessly and, as in Romania again, they ensured that their political machinations would not be hindered by the presence of the armed forces, which fought in Yugoslavia and Hungary until 1945. By then, the Stalinists were too well entrenched for the returning soldiers to dislodge from power.

Events in *Yugoslavia* resembled those in Poland most closely, although there were major and significant differences. The pre-War system had largely excluded the non-Serbs from effective power, and Royal Yugoslavia commanded only limited loyalty outside Serbia and Montenegro. The disintegration of the state was, therefore, rapid after the invasion of the country in 1941. The old élites were not only divided by deep-seated national cleavages, but had substantially different perspectives on politics and strategies for the future. The civil war that accompanied the anti-Axis resistance largely destroyed what had survived enemy action, so that by the time the Communist-led Partisans established their ascendancy in 1944-45, non-Communist opposition was feeble. Artur London's government was quite unable to mobilise meaningful support and was in any case helpless in the face of Stalinist intransigence.[8] The degree of physical discontinuity was very high; many of the members of the old élite either perished or went into exile or were imprisoned after the War. If anything, the situation in Yugoslavia in 1945 constituted an even cleaner sweep than the *tabula rasa* found in Poland.

Albania presents a somewhat different problem, inasmuch as it is difficult to see how it can be seriously argued that Albania had anything resembling modern political structures at all before the War. The country's political system was restricted to clan politics; the state administration did not operate throughout the territory; and the bulk of the population was illiterate and pre-modern. The impact of war—occupation by Italy, and later by Germany—only accentuated this state of affairs, since no native Albanian élite could emerge under such conditions. Thus the conflict between the Communists and the Balli Kombëtar was virtually predetermined from the outset. Once the Ballists began to turn to the Germans for military assistance, their fate was too closely tied to the foreign occupation forces in a highly nationalistic

[6] Henry L. Roberts, *Rumania: Political Problems of an Agrarian State* (Yale University Press, 1951), pp. 206–210, 233–235; Kenneth Jowitt, *Revolutionary Breakthroughs and National Development: The Case of Romania 1944–1965* (University of California Press, 1971), p. 89ff.

[7] Joseph Rothschild, *East-Central Europe between the Two World Wars* (University of Washington Press, 1974), pp. 347–353.

[8] Walter R. Roberts, *Tito, Mihajlović and the Allies 1941–1945*. (Rutgers University Press, 1973); Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *Yugoslavia* (1971).

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country with strong traditions of resistance. The Ballists were defeated in the civil war and other social forces were too weak to resist the communists.[9]

The applicability of the model to what became the *German Democratic Republic* demands virtually no discussion. The Nazi régime had already destroyed some of the power of the old élite and had driven democratic forces entirely from the political stage. Wartime destruction completed the process. The radicalisation of opinion and the discrediting of everything associated with Weimar as well as the Nazis likewise favoured a Left-wing predominance. In practice only the Social Democrats represented a serious obstacle to the Stalinist drive for power, and they were absorbed by 1946 into the newly established Socialist Unity Party, the *SED*.[10] In effect, then, in East Germany as much as in other East European states, the Communists took power in conditions of vacuum, where their opponents were weak or non-existent or discredited or uncertain of their own roles.

This argument in historical reinterpretation is also strengthened by the negative case, that of a country which resembled Eastern Europe in some respects, was an Axis ally, harboured a strong Communist Party, and was regarded as strategically important by the Soviet Union, yet was not the subject of a Stalinist takeover; namely *Finland*.

The crucial difference between Finland and the other states I have examined was that the former was defeated but *not* conquered. The pre-War élite retained control of power to a surprising extent in the light of its participation in the War; and, equally, it retained its self-confidence, despite having been defeated. The outcome of this was that the Finnish Communists were outmanoeuvred by their opponents and were unable to bring about the "restructuring of politics and society" (purge of the civil service, land reform, nationalisation, control of capital) that they favoured. The role of the Social Democrats in this was particularly noteworthy. Whether or not the Stalinists actually planned to execute a *coup* in 1948 appears barely relevant in this—they lacked the effective strength to do so successfully.[11]

All in all, therefore, the Communist takeovers in Eastern Europe were successful not just because of the Soviet presence or their own determination, but also because of the political vacuum into which they were able to move and the weakness and disorientation of their opponents. In that sense, the events preceding the takeovers constituted such a fundamental pre-condition for Communist success that they must be regarded as a separate stage on the road to monopoly power. This is the sense in which there were four stages in Stalin's historic takeover of Eastern Europe.

[9] Peter R. Prifti, *Socialist Albania since 1944: Domestic and Foreign Developments* (M.I.T. Press, 1978), pp. 9–21.

[10] Martin McCauley, *Marxism-Leninism in the German Democratic Republic: The Socialist Unity Party (SED)* (1979), pp. 3–16.

[11] Anthony Upton, "Finland", in Martin McCauley (ed), *Communist Power in Europe 1944–1949* (1977), pp. 133–152.

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IN THE MARGIN

No Way, to be going with it, like it is. . . .

Literary Origins & Journalistic Malpractice—By MELVIN J. LASKY

"I have proposed to myself to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men. . . ."
William Wordsworth *(1802)*

"The decadence of our language is probably curable. . . . Never use a metaphor, simile or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print . . . if you can think of an everyday English equivalent."
George Orwell *(1946)*

ABCDEFGHI
abcdefghij

I AM NOT so sure that Orwell, for all his well-meaning sharpness, got it quite right in his much-praised essay on "Politics and the English Language"; and this for two reasons. He placed far too much faith in the semantic powers of simplicity, brevity, and concision ("Never use a long word where a short one will do"); and consequently he missed the dialectical irony of all radical efforts to reform style and purify vocabulary: namely, that their theories of sound diction may in time contribute to the corruptions of another generation. The compulsory resort to "an everyday English equivalent" in a subsequent era when "the very language of men" has degenerated into impurities and evasiveness of a different kind can help create new and synonymous barbarities while extirpating the old.

Orwell's difficulty of 40 years ago remains: the larger implications of how words, phrases, sentences are effectively arranged for the perceptions of political problems. But, as I want to suggest, a contributing element in our current cultural malaise is the theory and practice of some of our most prestigious writers. Not a few are the immortals of our university anthologies; and thus they have had, even in snippets, a pervasive educational influence on contemporary readers and, especially, editors. As my two mottoes above hint, there are some literary origins to the distortions of modern political journalism. For purposes of shorthand brevity I will refer to a great disorienting tradition only by the names of Wordsworth and Hemingway; and the two worthies will serve to encompass (if in differing accents) two-way transatlantic malpractices.

What they have in common, in their impact on the journalistic style of our times, is their absolutistic commitment to the speech of common men, to the vocabulary and rhythms of natural conversation, as the proper carrier of discourse and communication. Here is meaning, here is art—and not in the abstractions of formal rhetoric, or the terminology of narrow-spirited pedants. For Wordsworth it represented the break with classical artificiality, with "gaudiness and inane phraseology"; for Hemingway it was the great heavyweight challenge to "get it right", to pin the truth to the mat, to knock off the excess fat, to be lean and simple and powerful.

This literary aesthetic has impinged on American journalism, especially, in an extraordinary way: so much so that it is difficult to find an elegant sentence, or a well-fashioned paragraph, or a sharply-turned phrase in the immense output of American daily newspapers. There are, of course, notable exceptions. A columnist like William F. Buckley jr., paradoxically, attracts millions (in the American immensity, only a minority), for he uses polysyllabic words and mandarin circumlocutions quite beyond the ken of the common man. Another regular commentator like George Will wins a singular reputation for making such recondite references to Samuel Johnson or George Eliot as to titillate North American readers with mild bewilderment. As for William Safire's ingenious exercises in up-to-the-minute etymology, they must often leave the impression that old dictionaries are quite superfluous in a new grammatical world of fashionable, fascinating, and fast-changing coinages. For the simple, stolid rest there is the pseudo-Wordsworthian homeliness, the neo-Hemingwayesque short slangy expostulation, making do for a full sentence.

THUS, WHEN Mr James Reston, after talking to the White House incumbent and Pentagon "top brass", wants to tell us that some new pattern is emerging in American foreign policy, he will announce (as he has several dozen times over the last 30 years) that "*We are now in a whole new ball game!* . . ." This is supposed to be meaningful to all who know and love their fun and games. Is it really? It may be pithy, but is it in any way revealing or even pertinent? What was the *old* ball game? Was it something like baseball (or, say, cricket): slow-moving and calling for great patience and endurance? Or was it as formally stylised as tennis, or perhaps rough-and-tumble like rugby? And that whole *new* ball game—football, or soccer, or basketball: fast-breaking and full of sudden surprises?

In the recent Presidential elections you couldn't quite find out precisely what was happening without looking up some old score-card from the Yankee Stadium. The Reagan-Mondale and the Bush-Ferraro debates were described as gladiatorial contests, mostly in terms of boxing metaphors (knock-outs,

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winning on points, even-steven draws). In New England coastal and other more nautical areas, one candidate was seen to have "taken the wind out of his opponent's sail." In a dispatch from Green Bay, Wisconsin, *The New York Times* (27 October, p. 24) has this to report:

> "Mr Bush, who has frequently used sports metaphors to make political points, attempted another one as he spoke here, across from the stadium in which the Green Bay Packers football team plays. But in trying to make a point about his debate with Mrs Ferraro, he confused the Packers with the rival Minnesota Vikings, prompting one aide to quip, 'We just lost Wisconsin.' . . ."

They didn't; they lost Minnesota; but it was (to borrow another great metaphor) a close-run thing.

In any event the pundit offers a phrase only to help fill a narrow newspaper column, and the conceit is merely decorative; we are left longing to know, see, feel more. "*No way!*" says the Senator, indicating his adamant objection to President Reagan's El Salvador aid programme. "*Right on!*" says the Congressman, revealing his approval of new budgetary appropriations. "*We'll go with that*", approves the *Washington Post* in its leading article. And the commentators on TV find that after the good news, here comes the bad news that nobody is "*telling it like it is.*"

The popular American mind, subjected to this—and I have bulging files of innumerable items—is being slowly reduced to a hash of pop vocabulary, mixed together out of slang and cant, slogans and witless wisecracks, which prevent and indeed sabotage any mature communication of an attitude, idea, or political viewpoint. The professional politician prefers the new argot because it serves to make him, or her, a person of the people. The newspaperman highlights it as the fast, colourful quote because this is, after all, good writing, truthful transcription, our natural speech, the way we talk. It is getting it, as Hemingway said, pencil-sharp right: punching straight, one on the jaw, like a real champ.

I can't help thinking of Wordsworth and Hemingway, the former having made a usable myth of "natural speech", and the latter a fetish of naturalistic transcription; and both in their ways forcing their conceits on reality. What people read serves to confirm them in the way they speak. In our modern media-massaged discourse the press's jargon goes a long way towards legitimising popular slang, with fashions changing as fast as the late racing editions. Soon, like a bemused mob of *bourgeois gentilhommes*, we won't even know we've been speaking that kind of prose all our born days.

BUT WHATEVER THE SPORT or contest, athletics in general has become the source for most of the pop semantics which colour the American political language. The *New York Daily News* (12 August, p. 43) features the headline over a political column:

WHISTLE BLOWERS GET WORD:
HERE'S MUD IN YOUR FACE

The muddy word in your face derives, of course, from the football umpire or referee blowing his whistle to stop play; and "whistle-blowing" can now cover the peremptory command to cease and desist, ranging from the force of a legal injunction ("Judge Sirico, the Watergate whistle-blower") to the power of political murder ("the crazed gunman almost blew the whistle on President Reagan's career").

Is there any traditional vocabulary left in which to convey careful and precise meanings with a certain amount of prudence, accuracy, and, on occasion, subtlety? The tongue-tied political scientists in the universities are verbally handi-

Walkers in the City

New York/London/Hollywood

A CELEBRATED *lady has been invited to a glittering film première. Everyone, but everyone, will be there and she wants to go. Ideally, she needs to go with someone whom she can trust not to pounce on her, someone who is fun—a friend and a companion. So the lady telephones her "walker."*

"Walkers" are to be found in every part of society, among royalty and aristocracy, in literary circles, in the salons of the art world, in the pop business and in café society. They owe their metropolitan status to the fact that they now have a name, there are more divorced women around than ever before and because, even though conventions tend to shatter like Meissen against marble, one great social truth still holds good: no woman wants to go out by herself.

HE IS *29. By day he is an interior decorator. By night he walks.*

"Really all you're doing is escorting someone, but an escort has come to mean someone who is paid, and walkers certainly aren't. To be a walker you've got to be someone in your own right and you've got to be known in the circle in which the woman moves. Otherwise people will say, 'Ah, that's her lover.' The man and women must be *sympathique*. . . . And we'll have this wonderful dissection of the evening . . . who was wearing what and so on.

It is important to know a lot of people and be at ease socially, so you can make introductions. And you have to do it in the right way. For instance, I see a certain amount of foreign royalty when they're in London."

The Walker's stern code of discretion prevented him from being specific. "If you use their full titles you can make your other friends uncomfortable."

SOME WALKERS *are less than happy with their new name. Artist Duggie Fields, who is often seen at parties with fashion designer Zandra Rhodes, feels the title is derogatory. "I don't think of myself as her walker. Sometimes I take her, sometimes she takes me—it depends which country we're in. A lot of socialising is business. Seeing people and being seen. . . ."*

Walking is quite an art. "The most important thing for a walker to know is when to step forward into the photographer's picture and when to step back. . . !"

"A walker is really what a courtier used to be in the 18th century", he explains, standing in the drawing-room of his imposing Knightsbridge home. But in fact, he says, "the word *walker* is derogatory. It has connotations of being gay and of secondary importance to the female." And one show-business publicist, who escorts many glamorous women, sounds veritably aghast at the term.

"Walking. Isn't that something you do to the dog?"

"YOU" MAGAZINE

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capped by their own new academic gobbledygook; and for the rest there is the only the diplomatic equivalent of the biff!-boom!-bang! of Tom Wolfe's old "New Journalism." In an account of Grenada in a recent copy of *US News & World Report* (6 August, p. 28) which I have just looked at, a caution against too much US interference is recorded:

> " 'If we do', explains one diplomat, 'we're likely to screw up.' "

The US envoy is even more eloquent:

> "We're not looking for a quick fix. We're looking for a lasting fix."

Thus, to the throwaway lines of sports writers add a bit of Army argot and street-wise slang, and you could have an entire vocabulary to translate the whole of a *Handbook of Diplomacy & International Politics*. What used to be known as "Haig-speak" must surely have opened the floodgates, and all distinctions of discourse are being washed away. It is not unlike the phenomenon last summer in Los Angeles where the blurred lines between classical Greek competitiveness and classy numbers in contemporary show-business became so indistinct that tap-dancing on a tree-top or juggling dishes underwater were about to become A-okay and right-on for an Olympic gold.

ALL DISCOVERIES of "true paths" are fated to take their wayward turns; and if, by accident (or dialectic), followers of Wordsworth's populistic instructions have in the course of time proved themselves to be gross, gaudy, and inane, his original example had (unlike Hemingway's) at least a potential self-critical sense which could point the way to find sounder bearings. Aim a little to one side, and this message still makes its point:

> ". . . They became proud of a language which they themselves had invented, and which was uttered only by themselves; and, with the spirit of fraternity, they arrogated it to themselves as their own. . . . From a variety of causes this distorted language was received with admiration. . . . The true and the false became so inseparably interwoven that the taste of men was gradually perverted; and this language was received as a natural language; and at length, by the influence of books upon men, did to a certain degree really become so. Abuses of this kind were imported from one nation to another, and with the progress of refinement this diction became daily more and more corrupt, thrusting out of sight the plain humanities of nature by a motley masquerade of tricks, quaintnesses, hieroglyphics, and enigmas."[1]

Or, as Orwell said when taking second thought after prescribing a set of firm rules to help "cure the decadence of our language":

> "Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous."[2]

But surely the one larger prescription it would be unruly to disregard amounts to this: when (as in Wordsworth's day) the high language of the scribes has become formal, stilted, lifeless, then go with the natural speech of the common man; but when the "very language" of common men has become depraved and incapacitated, try the diction of the intellectual few which, after the "motley masquerade", may be by now capable of some genuine communication. In linguistics, as in history, no class stays on top for long. Liberators turn to oppressors; the best become the worst, the first the last. Pick your wordmasters in high or low places, wherever you best find them, whenever you most need them.

[1] "Appendix to the Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*" (1802), in *William Wordsworth* (ed. Gill, 1984), pp. 616-17.

[2] "Politics and the English Language" (1946), in George Orwell, *Inside the Whale* (1962), pp. 155-56.

High-Minded Low Arguments

OUR TWO ARTICLES on the "Peace Movement", taken together—Alun Chalfont's "The Great Unilateralist Illusion" (ENCOUNTER, April 1983), and now Gerald Frost's devastating portrait of an "embattled Peace Fighter", E. P. Thompson (May 1984)—just about sum up the whole issue, at least for me. I would think that if in the future authors need to return to the subject—and it may well be politically, or intellectually, necessary—they should either lower their sights a little, or raise them.

By lower sights I mean taking a careful critical look at such evidence as there is of "Soviet influence." I realise this is a sensitive and patently disagreeable subject. As Lord Chalfont suggested, one *ought* to try and settle the argument on the highest level of analysis, commitment, evaluation of predictable consequences, etc. Still, one ought not wilfully to close one's eyes either to the systematic programme, munificently funded, of the Soviet propaganda machine, or to the occasional bit of proof of how some of those funds cross borders and help to "support friends and punish enemies." All too often this kind of discussion—not to mention "investigative journalism"—is considered too vulgar, embarrassing, *infra dig*. So much the worse for our cause of Western freedom and security.

Even October 1917 is still widely discussed in terms of a mass, popular revolution turning, in idealist desperation, to the Bolsheviks under Lenin's leadership. No such thing! At best the Bolsheviks had less than a quarter of the democratic votes cast to the Constituent Assembly after the February Revolution. And, most revealingly, between February and October a vast fortune was transferred from the German Imperial Treasury to the Leninist party—in order to help

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knock Russia out of the Eastern-Front war, which was the Kaiser's motive—and it worked. The vast funding enabled all the Leninist monthlies to become weeklies, the weeklies to become dailies, and the Bolshevik press saturated the country with huge editions. We know all this from the documents in the German archives, as reprinted and analysed by such scholars as George Katkov, Leonard Schapiro, Joel Carmichael,[1] et al. But this, again, is too "vulgar." We must never, in any circumstances, impugn the integrity of our opponents on the Left. They are all honourable men.

STILL, ON THIS LOWER LEVEL of argument, there is much that can be discovered, and much to think about. Not so long ago there was a curious little incident on the German-German border. It happened on the Berlin-Hamburg Autobahn when the Western officials stopped a car for a quick inspection. The driver happened to be a returning West German functionary of the German Communist Party (*DKP*). His Ford Transit vehicle was packed with boxes—and in them were some 2,000 special torches. You see them in all Peace and Left-wing demonstrations (they add a nice colourful touch, burning brightly). Needless to say, the *DKP* man could offer no papers or receipts for the goods.

Sloppy piece of work there on the part of the Eastern comrades; any one of a dozen of their good forgery labs could have counterfeited proper credentials. And for a moment the Western customs officials considered holding on to the packages until the matter was "clarified." I suspect they thought the whole affair was too "vulgar", as if the virulence of the Peace Movement really depended on demonstrators carrying around fiery torches from across-the-border. They let the *DKP*-man take his Ford Transit shipment Westward bound. (For the official report, see the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 11 January 1984.)

The recent Norwegian development was even more dramatic and obviously more important. Some months ago in Oslo the diplomat and former left-wing Labour politican, Arne Treholt, was arrested on spy charges. He is still being held and questioned. Among his "private" activities, according to the evidence which has been assembled, Treholt worked for the *KGB* (and also, occasionally, it seems, for the Iraqi Intelligence Service). His public life was devoted (as the *Times* dispatch from Oslo puts it) to "campaigning zealously for unilateral nuclear disarmament."

Is one really setting one's sights "too low" when one registers such facts and induces, or deduces, that in addition to a host of misguided idealists, illogical intellectuals, and innumerable other quite sincere "peace-fighters", there is a sinister and manipulative element to which almost everybody, for one reason or another, chooses to close his eyes? One can only hope that a few more editors will be alert to the role of *KGB* "disinformation" after the "legal victory" in London of Sir James Goldsmith over Rudolf Augstein's *Spiegel* (see the full-page text in both *The Times*, p. 15, and *Daily Telegraph*, p. 9, on 9 October 1984).

[1] See in ENCOUNTER (March, 1974) "German Money & Bolshevik Honour."

OF COURSE the "higher" sights need to be set by philosophers and historians. I tried to touch upon this theme in my "Footnotes to Peace & War" (ENCOUNTER, November 1983), and made an effort

> "to defend the balance-of-power principle of Deterrence as a fundamental—and very gratifying—phenomenon in the history of mankind. Where it obtains there is peace, or at least an avoidance of the very worst; where it is absent, there absolute violence takes over. . . ."

In the ensuing arguments over world-politics, I am persuaded that we ought to lengthen the historical perspective in this spirit, and see what the lessons of the past have been. Clausewitz was quoted, and the high generalisation is worth repeating:

> **"The conqueror is always peace-loving; he wishes to make his way into territory unopposed."**
>
> *("Der Eroberer liebt stets den Frieden . . . Er würde gern widerstandslos in unser Gebiet einziehen.")*

Who's Afraid of *Angst*?

THE ISSUE OF recent German disorientations appears to be preoccupying many writers in these pages and I think it worthwhile to return to one aspect of it, the *Angst* which I tried to describe in my account of confronting various West German political neuroses ("Living with an Insult in a Mind-Free Zone", ENCOUNTER, November 1983). I do this because I have received a number of letters from the few in the large Frankfurt audience who were not in the grip of the hostility which continuously flashed out at my dissident unorthodoxies. The real "flash-point" was not so much on the level of political and ideological arguments, but (as my correspondents interpret the altercation) on one raw and tender psychological note.

One young West German speaker interrupted me from the floor to make a point about the *Angst*, about the fears and anxieties which were driving the youth of West Germany out into the streets, into demonstrations before US bases, etc., etc. Why couldn't this genuine fear of war and *Nachrüstung* (the German word for the US-NATO resolve to "catch up" with weapons-imbalance in the East-West confrontation) be sympathetically recognised? My reply was possibly a shade excessive on the ironic and sardonic side, and it seemed to impugn in effect the psychological integrity of Peace Fighters' emotions and ethics. Having omitted this particular phase of the Frankfurt debate, I may have left my readers with a missing clue as to real German "disorientations." I had asked archly what exactly this *Angst* was, what were its symptoms and

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physiological consequences. Did it come for a few minutes every morning, something like Orwell's four-minutes-a-day of "fear and trembling", or did it suffuse the whole of the working day? Did it continuously, or sporadically, interrupt concentration and equanimity? Did one's hands shake, and was there ever fever or loss of appetite? Did the fears and anxieties induced affect pulse, complexion, etc.

Well, it was this challenge which caused the explosion. *Angst* was *Angst*, and you better believe it. But was it believable when only the American Cruise and Pershing missiles were *Angst*-making (and they weren't even in Germany yet!), whereas nobody seemed to be concerned with the lethal Soviet *SS-20* weapons already in place and aimed precisely at their heads at this very moment? It was futile to argue rationally with the irrational. They *knew* they were afraid; they believed it; they sensed its fearful vibes; they were only crying out on the eve of a frightful holocaust and sharing the same "*brennende Sorge*" (burning concern) as the great majority of the people.

SOMETHING OVER a year has now gone by. Has the concern burned itself out? What has happened to the *Angst*? It's just hard to find nowadays!

As the course of events would have it, the new NATO weapons arrived. The mass demonstrations of a "hot autumn" failed to stop them. They were put into place. And although they far from match—the ratio is perhaps 8 to 1—the Soviet preponderance, there has been a strengthening of both the Western deterrence and the Euro-American political will. Suddenly the demonstrations stopped; young persons throughout the country forgot to feel mortally afraid each day; and the free-floating psychological ration of passion and concern latched on to other, different, new militant issues of the moment.

One statistic tells all. The Paris-based Atlantic Institute conducted a poll recently (using Louis Harris International), testing the changes in German attitudes towards its serious problems and fears. It reported that "the fever chart of anxieties has eased dramatically." It referred to "the most stunning shift in attitudes" and found it evident in "the decline in fear about nuclear weapons and the risk of war." How volatile public opinion is! Or is it rather that when the manipulators grow weary, the manipulation ceases?

> "Only one in six people surveyed cited nuclear weapons as their greatest concern, making West Germans for the first time more optimistic on the issue than the French or British."

I quote from the summary in the *International Herald Tribune* (7 June 1984, p. 7):

> "Anxiety has been cut in half about nuclear weapons as compared to six months ago, when large anti-nuclear demonstrations were occurring and polls showed nearly one West German in two acknowledging worries about nuclear weapons. The missile issue has just disappeared. . . ."

What has not disappeared is the other major concern—call it what you will: "sounder", more "rational", more "real", etc.— about the existing Soviet build-up in the East and the shadow it throws over German and European security:

> ". . . it remains widely rated as the main culprit of international tension—listed by 47% of those polled in Britain and Italy and by about 50% of respondents in Japan, Norway and West Germany."

I might mention that the Harris Poll based itself on interviews with some 9,000 persons; and in the additional analysis by Gregory Flynn of the Atlantic Institute there is some reference to the partial causation of such factors as what is on "the front pages", the so-called "decompression effect" which involves "relief and even let-down" after high periods of tension and frantic attention. In any case they are wrestling with the freak problem of "barometers" running wild. "Expressed concerns", the pollsters seem to sense, have a moody expressionism all of their own. People like to worry, and sometimes for a moment feel better when they do. . . .

One can doubt whether any of these phrases actually explains the ups-and-downs and ins-and-outs of public attitudes under pressure from organised "save-the-world" cliques, expert in the use of slogans and "psycho-drama" for mass propaganda. Although my estimate of "four minutes" of *Angst* was perhaps a bit on the short and satiric side, the suspicion was surely right that manipulated and/or self-induced ideological emotions have a brief half-life.

Smoking Pistols, or "Bulls-Eye Accuracy"

IN HIS reflections on "The Once and Future Leader" (ENCOUNTER, June). François Bondy said many wise and witty things about the way they order these things in Soviet Russia. I was struck, especially, by two remarks:

> "Nothing is as short-lived as a Soviet dictionary of quotations"

(for Chernenko is now the compulsory source of all quotable eloquence) and:

> "The spectre which has been haunting Europe is the spectre of the memory hole."

Recent events in Moscow, presumably in the wake of Chernenko's first victory as the new leader, point up Bondy's analysis with such rich and vivid detail one might suspect that spirits like Koestler and Orwell had a hand in their emergence.

Naturally, the problem is not only with dictionaries of quotations but with the latest revised "who's who", namely all the official Soviet encyclopedias, which are the classic

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authorities on what goes down (and what comes up) the memory hole. So how can we get to know "what manner of man" this Constantin Chernenko is: and, perhaps even more important, upon what meat did this Caesar feed in his gladiatorial climb to the top?

Rumours and suspicions in Kremlinological circles (where more-or-less full and detailed biographical folders are diligently kept) have been rife for a long time. Was it the same Chernenko who was active in the purges of Dnepropetrovsk in 1938–39? The name is a common one ("Black"); someone of that name did work with Brezhnev (then the local Party chieftain); and, according to Soviet émigrés who came from the Ukraine, the chap was personally involved in the *NKVD* executions of that murderous epoch. They reported that the man involved carried the name of the old Czar's brother (Constantin), etc., etc. But how could one know, how could one be sure?

Last February *Tass* began "rounding out" the official biography of the new Leader, and—basing itself on the War encyclopedia of 1980 in which everybody's entry seems to be more than a little "militarised"—added:

> "From 1929 to 1930 Constantin Chernenko led the Agit-Prop section of the regional Komsomol committee of Krasnojarsk in Novoselovo. In 1930 he volunteered for service in the Red Army. . . . After his Red Army service he worked in the region of Krasnojarsk as director of the section for propaganda and agitation of the local Party committee of Novoselovo and Uyar, as director of Party education in the Krasnojarsk region. . . ."

Why one detail was missing here is the kind of puzzle Sovietologists are challenged to take on: the fact (which is mentioned in the *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia*) of Chernenko's work as an officer of the *NKVD*, as the secret police was called at the time.

I leave to more subtle and sensitive spirits the problem of whether the Red Army and the Secret Police establishment were in some special conflict, or perhaps only jockeying for position in the new Chernenko régime. But before too long additional details came "up from the memory hole" for the West's biographical folder.

One must recall that, of the 269 members of the Soviet Party's all-powerful Central Committee, every fourth member has a connection with the "military-industrial complex", and every tenth member is a General or a Marshal. Whose interests were served when, from obvious military sources, more details came to light from the personal dossier of Comrade Chernenko, then the favoured candidate for the leading role in the Party and (inevitably) in the state?

It was in the Army newspaper, *Red Star*, that we learned about that rather vague "military career" in the 1930s. What of these rumours about being a rough-and-tumble *NKVD* man? Was he the "Chernenko, Constantin" in Dnepropetrovsk? Well, evidently Comrade Chernenko's signature was under the special message of condolence which was sent to two old comrades—in Dnepropetrovsk. There is no record of other such sentimental messages. . . . And to give special life to the record of military service, *Red Star* revealed that in those years of the early '30s Chernenko was a "Chekist" with the *GPU* (*Cheka* being the first designation of the Secret Police, later *NKVD*, then *KGB*). Among his activities was the prosecution in Siberian territories of Moslem partisans and "smugglers."

Red Star published a group photograph which included the young Chernenko in 1932, in the old uniform with peaked cap; and the caption said:

> **"He used rifle and light machine-gun with bull's-eye accuracy. . . ."**

A copy of the photograph was actually offered (for a high D-Mark fee) to the editors of *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), and in the *Spiegel* for 16 April 1984, p. 142, it is exclusively reproduced. *Der Spiegel* goes on to speculate about the relevance of this information to the old suspicions that the man was directly and personally involved in the executions of the Stalin-era purges. "Unverifiable" is their conclusion, and anyway they take it all to be "banal." The first is understandable journalistic caution; the second is a curious pseudo-intellectual formula, echoing the notorious thesis of Dr Hannah Arendt about "the banality of evil."

No point arguing about it here, but is it truly "*banal*" to get to know the hitherto unrevealed facts about the new Bolshevik leader? He is obviously one of the two most powerful men in the world, now at the centre of superpower decisions over war and peace. The other man is, to be sure, the American President, and news magazines (like *Der Spiegel*) find it anything but banal to go back over old Hollywood B-movies to find Ronald Reagan in his younger days shooting from the hip with deadly or "bull's-eye" accuracy against Wild West villains.

But these "smoking pistols" were toys, with no real bullets, and no real bodies strewn lifeless on the ground. *This* is banal. But the guns, bullets, and corpses of Dnepropetrovsk?

Uwe Johnson's "Premature Obituary"

I WONDER, if I may be permitted this bit of editorial scepticism, what our mainly Anglo-American readership made of that strange, complex, mysterious account we published of the death in England of one of Germany's finest—if, also for them, in many ways inscrutable—new-generation German writers ("The Premature Obituary of the late Uwe Johnson", ENCOUNTER, September/October 1984).

It is all so puzzling, so intriguing: the dark circumstances of his death, his obsessive attitudes to life and literature, the uncanny details. I might mention that the English police, after the discovery of his 19-day-old corpse in his house in Sheerness-on-Sea, put the time of death down to the night of 22-to-23 February. In Johnson's last work, the final volume of his *Jahrestage* novel, there are the funereal reflections of one of his

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leading characters (Gesine Cresspahl) of a death on—the 22nd of February. But be that as it may, it is noteworthy too that the text of Uwe Johnson which ENCOUNTER published in English (and it was originally written by Johnson in English) had been mentioned by no obituary in a German newspaper or magazine, as if to justify the author's suspicion that even in death they wouldn't be getting him right.

What also went wrong—in the remarkable set of grisly coincidences which always marked his life and novels—is hardly even suggested by the discreet parenthetical note in which I referred to the source of some of my information, the special article by Tillman Jens which appeared in *Der Stern*, not a journal I find sympathetic. But the young man (son of Professor Walther Jens, a leading German critic) did a quiet and systematic job of "investigative reporting", and I among many other readers was impressed by it. But then the "Johnsonian" storm broke—and perhaps the record of lightning and thunder on the German literary scene will give some useful inkling of the heavy weather which the humble literati who only want to read and perhaps to write, have to endure these days in the vaunted land of "*Dichter und Denker*."[1]

THE FAMOUS Hamburg weekly *Die Zeit* published a fulsome (in the negative *OED* meaning of the word) obituary by its notorious *feuilleton* editor Fritz J. Raddatz for whom Johnson was known to have the utmost contempt. That was round one.

Round two was the passing reference in Jens's *Stern* reportage from Sheerness-on-Sea that the horrendous marital break-up between Uwe Johnson and Elisabeth Johnson, who lived only a few streets away, had been caused by the "unforgivable indiscretion of a former friend", named only as a well-known *feuilletonist* in Hamburg.

Whereupon, in round three, the Hamburg ex-friend named himself, and, flailing angrily, proceeded equally to denounce the "gutter journalism" which snooped around the life of a writer and came up only with squalid gossip. Fritz Raddatz held himself to be a true and loyal friend, and sometimes such friendships do have to survive cracks and break-ups. There had been no "indiscretion." Once again, Raddatz charged, *Der Stern*—found so lamentably culpable in the notorious incident of the Hitler Diary forgeries—was involved in *Gossenjournalismus*.

In the next rounds the contestants were clearly going for a one-punch knock-out. In *Der Spiegel* Hellmut Karasek poked cruel fun at Raddatz's self-defence, and made his case almost invincible by quoting from the text of a personal letter from Johnson to Raddatz in which the latter had been told off in no uncertain terms. From the floor, pleading for a long count, Raddatz now claimed a foul. Who had been swinishly snooping around personal secrets and private documents?

Meanwhile, the slug-fest was making its way through the *feuilleton*-pages of all the German *feuilleton*-proud newspapers. Marcel Reich-Ranicki and Joachim Kaiser registered their ringside judgments in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* respectively. Everybody, including Heinrich Böll and Günter Grass, took time off from fighting for peace or contemplating the metaphysics of Heidegger to get wildly excited. Uwe Johnson could have added a few additionally grotesque paragraphs to his "premature obituary" had he known (although he surmised it) how much *vanitas vanitatum* there was in the heady brew of German literary life. They seem always to be playing classical Weimar, with Schiller asking Goethe if he could bring Mme de Staël along to dinner (the farce is usually cast with Böll and Grass and the odd best-selling authoress).

In the last round there was a body stretched out on the floor. It was that of young Tillman Jens, *Stern*'s investigative reporter: the messenger who had brought the bad news. *Stern*'s editors had been terrified of yet another scandal. And someone had snitched that Jens had actually broken into the Uwe Johnson house at 26 Marine Parade, snapped a few photographs of the writing table (and "death chair"), and leafing through the desk drawers decided to make a copy of that embarrassing letter in which Johnson vented his fury on the hapless Raddatz. Was it right, moral, decent, proper for him to have done so?

Well, the West German investigative ethic is that it is all right to steal from Defence Ministries, Intelligence Agencies, multinational corporations, and other such monstrous reactionary structures, but not from the archives of liberal newspapers and certainly not from literary files which might embarrass worthy and progressive *feuilletonists*. *Der Stern* summarily fired Tillman Jens. His father was outraged—and Walther Jens, the academic and critic who had been a friend of Johnson and Raddatz (and a colleague of the latter on *Die Zeit*) resigned in a huff from a literary jury on which Raddatz was also a member; and then also quit *Die Zeit* (where he had been a columnist for a quarter-of-a-century). The finale was almost Shakespearean, for no one quite knew whose poisoned sword was drawing whose blood.

I DO NOT, the reader may well believe me, want to draw ENCOUNTER into all or any of this ridiculous, scandalous brouhaha. We must surely be reckoned as an innocent bystander, guilty only of showing perhaps a little too much literary curiosity and cross-Channel concern. But, then, as we have all been instructed by Peter Simple's Dr Heinz Kiosk, it could be that we are all guilty.

[1] The brawl is spreading, and stops at no frontiers (not even the Channel). In Richmond last weekend, at a memorial meeting for Uwe Johnson at "The German School in London", one famous Berlin novelist (Günter Grass) attacked a famous Frankfurt publisher (Siegfried Unseld) for having "betrayed" their mutual friend; and it made headlines in the press back home (e.g. "*Johnson und Grass*" in the *FAZ*, 29 November 1984, p. 25).

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LETTERS

Australian Defence

FROM HIS POSITION in the long tradition of Oxford lexicography it must be easy for Dr Burchfield to feel holier than other English lexicographers. One wonders if he sees them as colleagues or as competitors. In either case he should at least be fair. But he was not fair in his article in the September/October issue of ENCOUNTER, in which you and he suggested that other lexicographers are word-stealers: he was tendentious and he misrepresented evidence.

I would like to examine his claim that I fudged what he calls "the primary derivativeness" of *The Macquarie Dictionary*. My prefatory essay in that book sets out the details of editorial procedures by which we turned the *Encyclopedic World Dictionary* (*EWD*), used as a base, into the *Macquarie*. It acknowledges the relationship, in turn, between *EWD* and *The American College Dictionary* (*ACD*). It details the policies used to decide which *EWD* headwords were to be left out, and which retained; which headwords once retained needed to be redefined; which headwords needed to be added from our own citation sources. These policies are stated as an expression of our intention to produce an Australian dictionary, one focused on the present use of English in Australia. Our "having access to the *EWD*" as a base (a phrase which Dr Burchfield sees as a fudge) rested on an agreement between the publishers, reached after long and careful negotiation, followed by the payment of hard cash. Our right of access to *EWD* was never in dispute, and since it was a matter for the publishers to settle, the details seemed not to be relevant to an editorial statement.

But the extent to which we made a new book out of the base is certainly relevant even if not easily expressed. Dr Burchfield mentions a similarity of 93% between *ACD*, *EWD*, and the *Macquarie*, estimated apparently by headwords common to all three. Perhaps American, British, and Australian English are superficially alike to that extent—we do all speak the same language, after all. But even if the figure is right, however derived, I certainly do not accept it as a statement of the derivateness of one dictionary from another.

DR BURCHFIELD HIMSELF (in his confessedly uncharitable review of the *Macquarie* in *The Age* of 1 March 1982) acknowledged that in the settling of Australia the emigrants "forged new varieties of speech and writing that are superficially very similar to those of the land they left but underneath teaming [*sic*] with differences." Our *Macquarie* editors tried to do justice to what was underneath, and Dr Burchfield has completely underestimated the extent of this task (though the publishers' agreement did not, nor do the thousands of Australians who own and use the *Macquarie*, and who readily recognise their own language in it and are seldom disappointed when they consult it for local or "common-core" usage—I have good statistical evidence for this claim). In any case it is now nearly 200 years since the British settlement began in Australia, and though many of the words for which we give thanks to England and America retain their written form, it is their adaptation to the Australian context, in sense and usage, that has occupied the attention of the *Macquarie* editors and continues to do so as revision and updating proceed.

If anyone is fudging it is Dr Burchfield himself. What is it but a fudge to say, as he does, that the difference in pronunciation for particular headwords is that the *Macquarie* uses IPA notation whereas *EWD* and *ACD* use respelling? The fact is that the *Macquarie*, for the first time in any dictionary, gives Australian pronunciations for every word in its list. It is an Australian pronouncing dictionary, comparable in effort (except that its list is much longer) with the Daniel Jones dictionary for British received pronunciation. The features and the distinctiveness of Australian pronunciation are fully explored in a prefatory essay by my editorial colleague Professor J. R. L. Bernard. Your fair-minded readers will see that Dr Burchfield unfairly belittles the *Macquarie* by stating that the differences are notational.

Instead of basing his case on a few selected headwords, and on *EWD* definitions that were retained unaltered in the *Macquarie*, Dr Burchfield might have made a better estimate of our derivativeness by comparing whole pages of the *Macquarie* with the alphabetically corresponding pages of *EWD*, taking into account words omitted, words added, senses redefined, senses added, phrases and other run-ons added or altered, rewritten etymologies, new pronunciations. Any of your readers can do that for themselves, and will emerge from the exercise (I expect) persuaded that this is indeed an Australian dictionary, and therefore useful to Australians and others in a distinctive way. It is not a world dictionary, as *EWD* claimed to be, and certainly it is American (unlike *ACD*) only to the extent that Australian English has been influenced by American usage.

In his review of the *Macquarie* Dr Burchfield hailed it as "a major work of unmatchable content and skilful endeavour." I hope that represents his fairer assessment of the book.

A. DELBRIDGE
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PROFESSOR DELBRIDGE understandably looks with a loving eye at the rich vein of Australian vocabulary in his dictionary and is justifiably proud of the Australian pronunciations that he has substituted for those given in his source dictionaries. His professionalism in these matters is not in question. I thought it was time, however, to draw the attention of the public to the broad derivativeness of such dictionaries as the *Macquarie*. The distinctive Australian element forms only a small part of the whole dictionary, and Professor Delbridge is gazing, as it were, at only the speckles on the wings of his butterfly.

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Oxford University Press
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Orwell & Abortion

RE LEOPOLD LABEDZ's essay on George Orwell (ENCOUNTER, June and July-August 1984). If Orwell were alive today, he would point to the alarming number of abortions throughout the world as a tragic sign that "1984" already may have arrived.

George Comstock, the hero of Orwell's novel, *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1936), impregnates his lover, and after learning that she is carrying his baby, engages her in a conversation regarding what they should do. Comstock's lover proposes the "termination of pregnancy" as the "solution." But after she begins talking about money for the abortion, Comstock suddenly begins to understand that what they have been discussing is the killing of their unborn child:

> "For the first time he grasped, with the only kind of knowledge that matters, what they were really talking about. The words 'a baby' took on a new significance. They did not mean any longer a mere abstract disaster, they meant a bud of flesh. . . . It was the squalid detail of the five pounds that brought it home."

People who are for and against abortion have abused and manipulated language to gain support for their views. But certainly pro-abortionists have been especially guilty of brutalising language to cover up the fact that abortion is the killing of unborn babies.

ONE GLARING EXAMPLE of how pro-abortionists use *Newspeak* is when they argue that "We simply do not know when human life begins." The question of when human life begins is not theological or philosophical but rather is medical and scientific. And medical and scientific people generally agree that human life begins at conception.

The California Medical Association (in the September 1970 issue of *California Medicine*) affirmed the "scientific fact" that "human life begins at conception and is continuous, whether intra- or extra-uterine, until death." There can be little dispute that the genetic characteristics and identity of a human being are uniquely and irrevocably determined at the moment of fertilisation.

Moreover, the pro-abortion argument that "the foetus is simply a part of the mother's body" is refuted by medical evidence which demonstrates that the cells of an unborn baby

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have a genetic code different from those of the mother's body. The foetus is a separate and distinct human being.

ORWELL'S TRENCHANT observations regarding the abuse of language also apply to the pro-abortionists' argument that we must not enact anti-abortion legislation because that would "legislate morality."

The fact is that laws against voyeurism, incest, racial discrimination, slander, theft, rape, child prostitution and murder demonstrate that society indeed can and does legislate morality—and rightly so. Former US Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart (in April 1980) said as much when he observed that almost all our laws—for example, laws against theft and murder—have a religious origin in the Ten Commandments.

True, anti-abortion legislation would legislate morality, but only in the same sense that we legislate morality when we outlaw stealing, rape, and murder.

HAVEN BRADFORD GOW

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Memories of Russell & Barnes

MAY I OFFER YOU a few reflections on Sidney Hook's "Portrait from Memory" of Bertrand Russell (March 1984)? I greatly enjoyed it, and it checks perfectly with what I have known of this interesting and complex man.

I have to accept the judgment of experts on the worth of his philosophical and mathematical achievements. But, if I had not seen other examples, I would be puzzled that a man with such an organised mind could be so impulsive and irrational in the other aspects of his life. I remember from his autobiography that one day he was riding his bike and the thought occurred to him that he didn't love Alice, so he went home and told her so. This is the wife who somehow turned him from being an aristocratic conservative to a Socialist (one result being that he gave up liquor). Then, when during the First World War the King announced he was giving up liquor for the duration, Russell decided that somehow liquor abstention supported militarism; and so he resumed taking it.

From the time I heard him debate in Chicago (I think it was in the late 1920s) I admired the clarity of his speech, and later of his writings. I also found that in social conversations he was most pleasantly articulate, even when he was uttering something very close to nonsense. And as a Socialist he could take shocking positions on some socio-political issues.

THE FIRST CONVERSATION I had with him was in Bryn Mawr in September 1931. My wife and I were staying at a little inn there, and I saw him in the lobby, alone, reading a book. I asked him if he would rather read than talk; and he quickly shut his book and came over to meet my wife and join us in general conversation, in which neither he nor I controlled the subject. But he was then having certain troubles, and was feeling resentment against America. Among other defects of our society was the servant problem. He couldn't get any household help (actually, he could have if he had wanted to pay more than a riveter gets) and was bitter about the fact that his wife, a highly superior person, had to cook and wash dishes. He declared, in the most direct terms, that if you couldn't find a willing servant, you had to force someone; he used the word slavery, and justified it if domestic help were needed.

There were other serious faults with the USA, and though his voice stayed calm and his manner friendly, he gave some samples of them. The striking thing was that he was unbelievably ignorant about the US form of government. I had to explain that there were three branches; he *appeared* to think we had the British system. I still can't explain that.

If I had the conceit that I were an expert in psychology I might, in the end, put it down to the Barnes affair. After all, Russell's wife had been blocked at the door on an afternoon when Russell was to lecture. Her anger put her in hospital in Bryn Mawr, and that was why Russell was in the same little hotel that we were.

PROFESSOR HOOK has Albert C. Barnes' number quite well! He also had two sides. He was able and educated. On the first evening I met him, in an after-dinner conversation at the home of Carl McCardle, who wrote the noted *Saturday Evening Post* article "The Terrible Tempered Dr Barnes", we got on to matters of philosophy; and I found that Barnes knew two inconspicuous but important papers in the literature—one by Boyd Bode and the other (published in 1896) by John Dewey. I found his discussion of art informed, and considered his judgment at least as good as those of the critics who scoffed at his collection. (Having visited the Barnes Museum I say he collected well.)

But, as Hook recognised, he could also be an ogre. On the afternoon of my visit to the Museum, Barnes met me at the door, and courteously led me all about the place, commenting on (and listening to my comments on) his paintings. At the same time he proudly showed me a clipping from that day's paper about the way he had rejected a request from Alexander Woollcott to see the collection. It informed Woollcott that if he should show up he would be thrown out the door; and it was signed by the name of Barnes' dog ("Fidèle de Porte-Manech", as I remember).

On another occasion McCardle showed me a letter Barnes had proudly given him, brutally rejecting an offer from a well-known but then down-and-out novelist, to sell Barnes some antiques. (Among other insults Barnes told the poor fellow that his letter suggested that he was in the last stages of syphilis.)

How can anyone live close to a fellow like that? I didn't need to, although Barnes invited me to study and paint in his Museum, sending the word through Carl McCardle. I politely declined by the same route.

ONE MORE Barnes item. All during the writing of the McCardle article, Barnes kept supplying material, including examples of his worst behaviour, and was proud of the final form, which McCardle sent to the *Post* with the plain title "Philadelphia's Dr. Barnes." The *Post* made the change to "The Terrible Tempered. . . ." Barnes was furious, and not only denounced McCardle but asked John Dewey to go on the radio with a half-hour supporting denunciation. McCardle was my close friend, and he was so scared that one evening when we had guests for dinner, he phoned me and talked for 45 minutes. I couldn't hang up, for he was telling me of what he considered personal threats from Barnes, and even threats to his little daughter. (Of course I can't be sure of the nature of Barnes' threats, but this is how the frightened author responded.)

It's easy to see why Bertrand Russell came to dislike the US, and Hook's article explains it well. What a sad thing it is that in the late years this highly capable mind turned to bitterness!

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ENCOUNTER acknowledges financial assistance from, among other generous donors, the Arts Council of Great Britain.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
BENHAM'S, COLCHESTER

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Son of "Radical Chic"

"Radical Chic invariably favours radicals who seem primitive, exotic, and romantic, such as the grape workers, who are not merely radical and "of the soil" but also Latin; the Panthers, with their leather pieces, Afros, shades and shoot-outs; and the Red Indians, who, of course, had always seemed primitive, exotic and romantic. At the outset, at least, all three groups had something else to recommend them, as well: They were head-quartered three thousand miles away from the East Side of Manhattan."

TOM WOLFE, "Radical Chic" (1970)

IT was a golden age for many people, the decade of radical causes. It's a lot tougher now, serving on the front lines night after night, washing down pound after pound of semi-ripened brie with lukewarm chardonnay on behalf of one more common cause. How many more causes can there be?

At least one—Nicaragua.

We got onto this last week, when we read a long story in the Style section of "The Washington Post" about Nora Astorga. Nora Astorga is the deputy foreign minister of Nicaragua. Ms. Astorga is famous. By her own account, Nora Astorga joined the revolution to overthrow Anastasio Somoza by luring one of his generals to her home with the expectation of a liaison. Ms. Astorga excused herself momentarily from her bedroom, and her colleagues emerged from hiding and slit the general's throat.

Last week she was in New York. Accompanied by Daniel Ortega, Commander of the Revolution, Nora Astorga caused the resurrection of Radical Chic at a reception given by New York attorney Michael Kennedy for the two Sandinistas in a setting entirely appropriate to our times—the New York Athletic Club. "The Washington Post" reported:

"Across the room, a swelling crowd of women talked about Astorga beneath ceiling murals of men wrestling, boxing and running track. 'Oh, God,' said Susan Horowitz, a political activist who champions liberal causes (and the wife of MTV president, David Horowitz). 'To try to get the guy to bed, and then kill him! Fantastic. It's like a western. That's my dream, to do that to Reagan, George Bush, go right down the line. I've got to meet this Mata Hari', Ms. Horowitz said, 'She's the most exciting modern female revolutionary around. I love it.' "

THREE DAYS LATER, **on "60 Minutes," much of America met her. In an interview-profile conducted by Ed Bradley, Nora Astorga spoke of her life, her ideals and the revolution. More interesting, though, was the film footage of Ms. Astorga visiting a "refugee camp" inside Nicaragua. The deputy minister, Mr. Bradley intoned, was visiting "people who fled their villages following attacks by contras, or counter-revolutionaries, many of whom are former Somoza national guardsmen who get their money and their weapons from the CIA."**

Hmmm. It's widely known that there are "relocation camps" in Nicaragua containing Miskito Indians moved forcibly from their homelands—with some loss of life—by Ms. Astorga's colleagues, and there are camps in Honduras of Nicaraguan refugees who fled the Sandinistas. But refugee camps in Nicaragua? It was not mentioned that the contras are led by former anti-Somoza comrades in arms of Ms. Astorga. One of the most famous, Eden Pastora, was shown—but inexplicably not identified by Mr. Bradley—standing beside Ms. Astorga in an old photo. The "60 Minutes" reporter probably didn't want to ask impolite questions.

On to Hollywood and Harvard.

HOLLYWOOD FIRST. **After a speech at San Francisco's prestigious Commonwealth Club, Comandante Ortega flew to Beverly Hills, where he spoke before a group of concerned Hollywood residents called the Committee of Concern for Central America. Mr. Ortega is a sure-thing candidate for president in Nicaragua's Nov. 4 elections, which explains why he can do his campaigning in glitzy Hollywood rather than grim Managua.**

*He addressed the committee outside the home of Elizabeth Montgomery (formerly of "Bewitched") and her husband, Robert Foxworth (of "Falcon Crest"). "We are a small, poor nation of barely three million people that is being submitted to a policy of aggression and extermination", the commandante told the Sunday gathering, which included committee chairman, Mike Farrell ("M*A*S*H"), Charles Haid (Renko of "Hill Street Blues"), Darryl Hannan (the mermaid in "Splash"), Bonnie Franklin ("One Day at a Time"), Orion Pictures President Mike Medavoy and Sen. Chris Dodd, normally of Connecticut. On Monday, he flew to Harvard.*

Speaking at the invitation of Harvard Law School, the comandante told an audience of 1,300: "The American government has poised itself to exterminate the Nicaraguan people." To this the students shouted back, "*No pasaran!*" meaning, "They shall not pass." *No pasaran* is a famous revolutionary slogan from the Spanish Civil War. Possibly this means the Sandinista Directorate can soon expect to find the Harvard Law Brigade in Managua. More likely, the brigade will get no further south than Capitol Hill, which responded to the comandante's campaign this week by cutting off U.S. aid to the contras.

TONIGHT IN CHICAGO, *Hollywood's Committee of Concern kicks off a five-city tour titled "Town Meeting on Central America." A spokeswoman for the entertainers' committee emphasized that the group is "nonpartisan," and favors "self-determination and nonintervention in Central America." Jackson Browne is going to sing. Haskell Wexler's going to show his new film on Central America, "Return to the Front." Studs Terkel will talk. There will be dramatic readings. We'd like to suggest one, delivered by Commander Ortega in Managua in August to honor the Sandinist Youth Movement. Perhaps Studs Terkel could read it.*

The comandante was deriding his critics and praising the youths for their work in Sandinist Defense Committees (CDSs), Cuban-style groups that spy on neighbors, parents and priests and report any grumbling to Sandinist leaders. Proclaimed Senor Ortega: "Yes, the CDS, even if the haughty gentlemen and ladies vomit curses. Even if they get headaches and their stomachs turn upside down. Swallow your vomit, curses, headaches and spleen, gentlemen, because the CDS will be here today, tomorrow and always."

BACK IN THE GLORY DAYS *of Radical Chic, the owner of a Manhattan art gallery, after listening to appeals for support for a Marxist revolution long since past, asked a question that puts the American travels of Nora Astorga and Daniel Ortega in perspective: "I won't be able to stay for everything you have to say, but who do you call to give a party?"*

THIS ARTICLE *appeared as an editorial in "The Wall Street Journal" (New York).*

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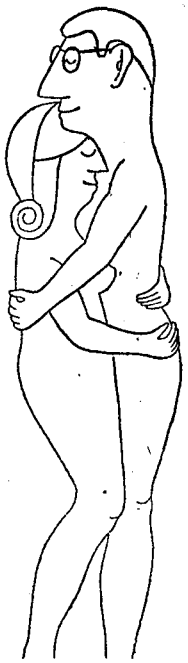

London

DISCRIMINATION: **The trade union NALGO today announced a campaign against Sex Discrimination in pension schemes [writes John Westwell]. That sounds a worthwhile cause on the face of it. Discrimination is like War or Poverty—most people are against it in principle.**

But NALGO are guilty of the usual muddled feminist claptrap when they say the problem is that "occupational pension schemes fail to live up to women's needs and expectations."

Most of the sex discrimination in pensions is actually against men. The Director of the £100 million University of London pension fund says:

> **"The discrimination in pension schemes is that those who die pay for those who live. We have roughly equal numbers of male and female members. But more of the deaths are among the men than the women."**

THE STANDARD

New York

THE BIG CHILL: *Here's a question for former student radicals:*

> *"The truth is, I never read much Karl Marx (*TRUE **or** FALSE*)."*

The question, a kind of litmus test of authentic radicalism, is actually in a questionnaire mailed to 300 former members of SLATE, *the radical student movement founded at the University of California at Berkeley in 1957. Former* SLATENIKS, *as they call themselves, have been invited to Berkeley this weekend for their first reunion.*

The questionnaire tries to identify past and present passions of former SLATENIKS. *One section poses a choice of 50 entertainers and institutions "that affected you deeply", ranging from the Rock group "Country Joe and the Fish" to the novel* **Catch 22**.

WALL STREET JOURNAL

Cambridge

MARX FOR HIGH MARKS: *A question set for an English Literature internal examination at King's College, Cambridge, recently must have concentrated a few minds:*

"Hamlet, an ineffective Lenin. Discuss."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Oxford

CROSS WORDS: **The invitation to our readers to quote examples of allegedly self-indulgent lexicographical writing from the Oxford English Dictionary has unsurprisingly brought forth few comments. Its authors were very serious scholars.**

Two examples of arguably eccentric definition not from the *OED* are:

1. The sad little parenthesis after "*currant bun*", in the great Henry Cecil Wyld's *Universal* dictionary, "(with few or no currants)".

2. The definition of "*it stands to reason*", by the Fowler brothers (who boiled down the *OED* in 1911 to make the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*):

> **"It is logically demonstrable (that)" or popularly, "I shall lose my temper if you deny (that)".**

Alas, in 1976, this felicitous item was eliminated from the *COD*.

But shafts of lexicographical wit can still be found even within the covers of the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*.

In the 1946 edition, the 14-line entry under "Oxford" includes:

> **definitions of Oxford "bags . . . blue . . . clay . . . frame . . . man(!) . . . mixture . . . movement . . . shirting . . . shoes . . . tracts."**

The entry under "Cambridge" consists of less than one line. It reads, in full,

> **"C. blue, light blue".**

Cowardly editors of more recent editions, however, have expanded the Cambridge entry considerably, even to the extent of admitting the existence of a university there.

THE TIMES

London

RING THE CHANGES: *The dull, old Telephone Directory is getting a facelift and becoming a book that's colourful, much brighter and easy to read.*

In keeping with its new image it is being renamed what everybody already calls it—**The Phone Book.**

DAILY EXPRESS

Paris

PREMIER LEÇON: **When President Mitterrand was in Washington a few days ago, he explained to reporters why he refused to speak in English. "After the War I heard Winston Churchill, who insisted on speaking totally incomprehensible French. Well, this lesson has guided my steps."**

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

London

"HATE, HATE, HATE": *If you are reassuring yourself by the belief that ordinary, decent, law-abiding people can* **never** *be brainwashed, see the film "1984" and understand, when you watch the scene where hundreds of citizens scream, "***Hate, hate, hate***" that they are not actors.*

They are Wiltshire farm labourers, students, housewives, and milkmen hired by the day by the film company.

*Most of them had never acted before in their lives. But they were so affected by the scene and mass hysteria that when the director shouted "Cut!" he couldn't get them to stop for quite a long time. They obsessively carried on shouting "***Hate, hate, HATE***", with their fists raised in the air and the tears streaming down their faces.*

DAILY MAIL

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ENCOUNTER in 1984

The following is a selection from the articles, stories and other contributions published in ENCOUNTER during 1984. The price of these back numbers is £2.25 ($5.00) a copy, plus 50p ($1.00) for postage and packing. Please quote the month of issue when ordering.

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(January)

GOLO MANN
Raymond Aron – A Memoir
(January)

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Grenada & the Noble Lords
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Stephen de Mowbray, Brian Crozier, Edward Pearce, Patrick Cosgrave
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"The Watteau exhibition... is a rare and marvelous event."
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